AM RECD
NO. 2. DIVISION OF INTELLIGENCE BUREAU
DEPT. OF STATE

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

BAGHDAD, IRAQ.

January 10, 1930.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 19 1930
FOR DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
INDEX BUREAU
890f.00/23

SUBJECT: FAISAL ED DAWISH AND THE BORDER TROUBLES.

1—1055

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to previous despatches from this office concerning the rebellion in Nejd led by Faisal ed Dawish and to submit a further report on that subject.

PLANS FOR BLOCKADING FAISAL ED DAWISH.

In the November 30th issue of the Baghdad Times, it was reported that Shaikh Hafedh Wahba, said to be a representative of King Ibn Saud, was on his way to Kuwait to open negotiations with the Shaikh there with the aim of blockading Shaikh Faisal ed Dawish, the rebellious Akhwan leader. It was further stated that Shaikh Hafedh Wahba had confirmed a statement published in the press of Baghdad to the effect that King Ibn Saud would personally lead his forces against Faisal ed Dawish and had ordered four aeroplanes from England which were primarily intended for military purposes but which would be utilized in time of peace for civil aviation. In this connection it may be added that Vice Consul Brown was informed by officers in the Royal Air Force stationed at Baghdad that King Ibn Saud had engaged the services of four reserve officers of that force to pilot these planes.

FILED
APR 21 1930

FAISAL

FAISAL ED DAWISH REPORTED TO SEEKING A PLACE OF REFUGE.

The Baghdad papers have published little news of events along the border, however one of the Arabic papers published on January 6th an article which it stated had appeared in a Syrian paper to the effect that Ibn Saud was personally leading his forces against Faisal ed Dawish; that that chieftain had sought a truce but was informed that the only way he could obtain a cessation of hostilities was unconditional surrender; that he had then sought permission from Iraqi officials to take refuge in that country but had been refused and that he had then made the same request of French officials in Syria.

RENEWED ACTIVITY ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER.

From various sources this office was informed about the first of the year that there was renewed activity along the southern border. At that time the British forces in the southern desert included three armored car sections from Baghdad (Hinaidi). On January 5th a fourth armored car section was despatched from Baghdad to the scene of operations and on January 6th a detachment of the Iraq Army commanded by a British officer and consisting of 120 men and 37 machine guns left Baghdad for the same destination.

An armored car section of the Royal Air Force usually consists of five Rolls-Royces and three Fords; the detachments of the Iraq Army use Fords and Chevrolets. Each car carries one machine gun and a crew of three or four men, enough gasoline to enable it to travel 800 miles from its base of supplies and water and food sufficient to sustain its crew for fifteen days.

The

THE SURRENDER OF FAISAL ED DAWISH.

The writer was invited by the High Commissioner, Sir Francis Humphreys, to dinner at the Residency on Thursday night, January 9th. After dinner the High Commissioner took the writer aside and conversed with him for about an hour (the statements made by Sir Francis Humphreys as to his work in Iraq will be reported in another despatch). During the course of this conversation he stated that Faisal ed Dawish had been surrounded, had surrendered to the British that very morning (January 9th) and had been placed on board a British war vessel in the Persian Gulf.

NEWSPAPER COMMENTS.

The newspapers of Baghdad printed no news of this event in their Friday issues; however on that day the Baghdad Times published the following article:

STOP PRESS.

Akhwan Refugees in Full Flight.

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.
Basrah, Thursday.

There is great activity on the Southern Iraq border, where rebel tribes are fleeing from Najd in consequence of an offensive by King Ibn Saud.

They are crossing the Iraq and Kuwait frontiers.

The Royal Air Force, with armoured cars, are endeavouring to stem the influx. They have disarmed some of the tribes and captured a rebel leader, Ibn Mashur, who is interned at Abtiyah.

In the January 11th issue of "Al Iraq", an Arabic newspaper published in Baghdad, appeared the following telegram which that paper had received from its

correspondent

correspondent in Basrah:

> "Nejd forces have pressed Kuwait. British authorities there captured Dawish and other rebel leaders and sent them to Basrah for deportation by sea".

PEACE ON THE SOUTHERN BORDER.

It is thought that the surrender of Faisal ed Dawish and certain of the chieftains who supported him will check hostilities on the southern border, for the reason that the determination of Ibn Saud to bring peace to his country as shown in his personal conduct of the offensive against Faisal ed Dawish and his purchase of four aeroplanes for use in military operations will probably deter any other chieftain from revolting for the present at least.

FORCES STATIONED AT THE BORDER FORTS.

In despatch No. 1006, dated October 31, 1929, it was reported that the garrisons had been withdrawn from the border forts of Salman and Besayah. Subsequent inquiries have revealed the fact that while detachment of the Iraq army which formerly garrisoned those forts had been removed, their places had been taken by detachments of the Iraq police. It is quite possible, although no definite information on this subject has as yet been obtained, that this move was made out of regard for Ibn Saud's feelings as he might be expected to view with less antagonism police rather than army forces near the frontier of Nejd.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Alexander K. Sloan,
American Consul.

File No. 800.
AKS/JNC.

NO. 44.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 17 1930
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

IN BUREAU
DEPT OF STATE
MAR 25 1930

AMERICAN CONSULATE

BAGHDAD, IRAQ.

March 25, 1930.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 17 1930
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
M

SUBJECT: ALLEGED DEATH OF FAISAL ED DAWISH.

APR 17 30

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK

	Yes	No
To the Field		✓
In U. S. A.		

No dist

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

890f.909/23

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to despatch No. 18, dated February 3, 1930, concerning the conference between King Ibn Saud of Nejd and King Faisal of Iraq and especially to that paragraph in which it is stated that British officials handed Faisal ed Dawish over to King Ibn Saud upon the latter's promise that his life would not be taken, and to report that it is rumored that Faisal ed Dawish is dead.

FILED
APR 23 1930

Certain officers (British) of the Royal Air Force who went to the southern border at the time of the capture of Faisal ed Dawish, as reported in despatch No. 2, dated January 10, 1930, returned to Baghdad some weeks ago. Shortly after their return, Arabic papers printed a rumor to the effect that Faisal ed Dawish had died of dysentery a day or so after he had reached King Ibn Saud's encampment, but the truth of this rumor was later denied by other papers of Baghdad. A few days ago Mr. W.R. Moir, an Englishman who is the manager of the Basrah branch of MacAndrews and Forbes Company, an American firm, called upon me and in answer to a question as to the whereabouts of Faisal ed Dawish stated that tribal followers of King Ibn Saud who had journeyed from their camp to Basrah had brought the

information

890f.00/23

INDEX BUREAU
APR 24 1930

information that he had died of dysentery two days after he had been turned over by the British.

As Mr. Moir has been many years in Iraq and knows conditions and people, and as he seemed to have no doubt that Faisal ed Dawish was dead, I decided to get some information from some of the Royal Air Force officers who had been stationed on the southern border. I was informed that certain of these officers had slipped over the frontiers, had visited King Ibn Saud's camp and had there been informed that a day or so after Faisal ed Dawish had reached that camp he had been handed a cup of poisoned coffee. I am informed that all these officers are convicted of the truth of the report they heard in King Ibn Saud's camp.

I have been informed by Americans, British and Iraqis that when an Arab chieftain gives "dakhala" or protection to his enemy, he can not violate his pledge and that consequently if Faisal ed Dawish was poisoned, it could not have been by the order or with the connivance of King Ibn Saud. However, a promise of "dakhala" given by Ibn Saud does not bind his followers.

Whether Faisal ed Dawish is dead or alive can not be stated, nor if dead, whether he died from being poisoned or from dysentery. However, many people believe that he is dead, and this belief is strengthened by the fact that no news of him has been received in Iraq since he was handed over to King Ibn Saud.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Alexander K. Sloan

Alexander K. Sloan,
American Consul.

File No.800.
AKS/jnc.

NO. 498

CONFIDENTIAL

PM RECD

INDEX BUREAU
DEPT. OF STATE

AE
A-Pc

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

BEIRUT, SYRIA JUL 19 1930

AUG 4 1930

Mecca newspaper clipping of speech of Ibn Saoud.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 1930
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 13 1930
A-O/O

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK

	Yes	No
To the Field		
In U. S. A		

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Copy Transmitted to the Commercial Office (A-O/O) 8-13-30

SIR: To Aden, Cairo

Consulate Aden
Legation Cairo

890F.00
Note 1/

890F.001-
Ibn Saud

I have the honor to forward herewith as of some interest to the Department a translation of a report which appeared in the "Um el Kora," a Mecca newspaper, on May 5, 1930, of a speech of Ibn Saoud at one of the banquets offered to him by his people upon his return from his campaign against the recently rebellious elements of his kingdom led by Feisal El Dweish.

The newspaper was forwarded to this Consulate General by the Consulate General's dragoman (a Christian Syrian) at Damascus, with the observation that the King's speech demonstrates that the Arabs, in their outlook upon the world and its affairs, have not progressed from where they were thirteen centuries ago. The speech has the tone of public utterances of

Mohammedan

890F.00/25

FILED
AUG 14 1930

NE
8/13/30

Mohammedan leaders of the past, declaring the superiority and perfection of the Islamic creed and preaching Mohammedan fraternity and hatred of the European, and indeed it displays no modern viewpoint. It is the sort of speech, however, that Ibn Saoud might have been expected to make to the fanatically religous population inhabiting his land, upon his return from putting down a revolt in his kingdom.

I have endeavored to ascertain Syrian Mohammedan opinion of Ibn Saoud, who seems to be the most prominent figure today in the Mohammedan world, with the thought that the Syrians, along with the other Arabs, might some day look toward him as a leader who could unite and hold them together in their growing opposition to Western intervention in their affairs. I would gather, however, that while Ibn Saoud is greatly admired by the Syrian Moslems because of his political successes and autocratic position, the puritanism of his religious creed and that of his followers and the Syrian feeling of superiority to the "desert" Arabs are factors which, for the time being, discourage a rapprochement.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

George L.Brandt,
American Consul.

4 Carbon Copies
Received

Enclosure:
Translation of report of speech made by Ibn Saoud published in "Um el Kora" of Mecca on May 5, 1930.

1 copy detached for Note

Distribution:
Original and four copies to Department.
One copy to American Embassy, Paris.
One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul.

800
GLB:HT

(Enclosure to despatch No. 498 of George L. Brandt, American Consul at Beirut, Syria, dated JUL 1930 entitled "Mecca newspaper clipping of speech of Ibn Saoud.")

(Translation)

Speech of His Majesty the Great King During the Banquet at Mecca

I thank God who made possible these great meetings of many benefits. They are really important meetings of which we are in great need at all times. The object of them is not the food and decorations. Such thoughts do not concern us. The important thing is to discuss what will elevate the dogma of the unity of God, the one and only God, and will call for sincerity in worshipping the great God. This is the high aim of these meetings.

God, may His power be great, is wise. He gave many benefits as a result of these meetings in His holy house at Mecca, the most important of which is sincerity in worshipping God on this most sacred ground, where He made His house, and sent His prophet from the best tribe in this land. God esteems most highly the pious. In Islam no Arab was superior to another except by virtue of his piety. An Arab is not better than an alien except in being a Moslem. The pride and greatness of the Arabs is Islam and Mohammed (prayers and the peace of God on him). The beloved by God is the pious and religious. The most honored by God is the most religious. God inspired His prophet Mohammed with the best of books. He commanded us to believe this book and His prophet. This is our great glory.

The object of this meeting is to uplift the name of Islam and to act according to its name which means resignation to the great God and obedience to Him and belief in His book and prophet.

The principles of Islam are built on the book of God and the laws of His prophet, and the acts of the great Khalifs and what was agreed upon by the disciples and later by the four expounders of the law. This we consider right and from it we do not deviate.

Another object of this meeting is to know each other and to become acquainted. May God help us to serve religion and spread its truths. In this, and this alone, we gain success and honor in this world and in the world to come. Have faith that God helps him who works and struggles for this.

Of

Of the questions on which we should work in this regard the one that is considered the most important as a service to our religion is purifying Islam of the impurities of traditions which have attached themselves to it, of which it is innocent, but which were fastened to it by those whose object was selfish gains.

This meeting is to form acquaintances. It is through the unity of Islam that we can best come to know each other. Our duty is to hold fast to its teachings and to live according to its commands in order to be victorious in this world and the next.

God, may He be praised, left nothing either great or small unmentioned in His book. They say "Liberty" and claim it as a European idea. The truth is that our Koran has taught complete liberty guaranteeing the rights of all people. It taught fraternity and equality such as no nation has yet dreamt of. He made the small and great, the strong and weak, the rich and poor, brothers and equal. They say European civilization is the highest aim. This is false imagination as God gave us the best of everything. The most beloved things to us are sincerity in action, and good will. Sincerity in action is our greatest weapon. Therefore, we must obey God with sincerity.

I do not glory in royal titles nor in royal magnificence. I am not infatuated with titles. I do not run after them, but I glory in the Mohammedan religion and am proud that we are missionaries for the unity of God and the spread of His religion. The most beloved task to us is to work in this way. Every time we accomplish anything in this regard, even the smallest thing, we feel satisfied and tranquil. We feel that we have a glory more wonderful than royalty and its magnificence. We are calling for religion with traditions and for unity indivisible. God commanded us to look into every matter in our lives and to try our best to preserve our existence. God commands us to be strong. The world is not all the same. If we study the conditions in Europe, we find that the Europeans have fortified themselves with iron and electricity, but we seek the protection of God alone. He who seeks God's protection is helped. We call for faith in the great God, His prophet, His book and the rules of His prophet. We call for it with all our power, secretly and publicly, without hypocrisy or deceit.

What is astonishing about journalists is that whenever they enter an argument with Europeans, they are at their best. They are lenient, and their criticisms are kindly. But when they argue with Mohammedans, their method is changed and they argue with deceit and lies, and they criticize unjustly and harshly.

An Englishman

An Englishman came to a Bedouin of Irak during the World War and said to him: "I will give you one guinea if you kill this dog." The Bedouin killed the dog. He said to him: "I will give you two guineas if you skin it." He skinned it. Then he said to him: "I will give you three guineas if you eat its meat." The Bedouin ate the dog. After that the Englishman said: "This is how we have conquered you, O! Arabs!"

This is a bitter painful fact. We Moslems should acknowledge that we do not love each other, but we intrigue against each other even in face of an enemy. We are not ashamed to do it. You do not find unity among Moslems binding them together, or friendship to keep the enemy away. King is enemy to king; merchant, to merchant.

I was brought up in the desert. I can not embellish my speech. I know the truth naked from all adornment. Our glory and power is in Islam. I care not for riches or wealth. My whole concern is to elevate the word of Moslems and their religion. We will continue in our method, I and my descendants, for ever. We will not deviate from it a hair's breadth. We beseech God for success.

———— o ————

From "Um el Kora" of Mecca,
of May 5, 1930.

Translator: AG

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

INDEX BUREAU
890F.00/ 2
N

SEE 890f.01/18 FOR # 426

FROM Egypt (Gunther) DATED July 18, 1930.
NAME

TO

REGARDING discounting rumors that Ibn Saud is planning to take military action to annex the Yemen.

mb/

[redacted]

Triplicate

[redacted]

[redacted]

In speaking and I have since kept in mind the Department's expressed desire that I communicate to it any information which I might be able to obtain regarding the character and extent of American commercial interests, actual as well as potential, in the Hejaz.

Shortly after the receipt of the instruction under acknowledgment, Mr. Ralph Cheesbrough, American Automobile Trade Commissioner for the Near East (since appointed Assistant Commercial Attaché at this post) undertook an extensive tour of the principal automotive markets established in the outlying regions of his "district". This projected tour was to include a visit to Jiddah. Mr. Cheesbrough, as the Department is no doubt aware, has had a very considerable experience in the Near East both as a former member of the Consular Service, as the representative of various American postwar trade ventures and in his present capacity as a representative of the Department of Commerce. He is interested in the political as well as the commercial aspect of current developments in the Near and Middle East and is, I believe, both careful and discriminating, if not expeditious in his investigations.

Prior to Mr. Cheesbrough's departure, therefore, I had him read carefully the Legation's file on the question of the recognition of the Hejaz, and I requested particularly that he prepare for me, for transmission to the Department, a report embodying any information which he might be able to obtain while at Jiddah regarding actual and potential American commercial interests in the Hejaz. Shortly after his return to Cairo he was obliged to go to Beirut on official business. It was, therefore, only in

the .....

the latter place that he prepared the requested report.

This report, two copies of which are enclosed herewith, is in the form of a letter to me, dealing in a general way with the subject in question; and with it are enclosed copies of certain listed reports made by him to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. I regret that the enclosed carbon copies of the report are, though not illegible, hardly such as I should have desired. I have not, however, thought that the Department would wish this office to recopy its fifty-two pages of single spaced type; nor have I had copied for transmission to the Department the 5,000 word article written by Mr. Shoiburgh and referred to in the third paragraph of Mr. Shoiburgh's covering report to me. I do not enclose either the last two enclosures of his covering report, i. e. those dealing with the application of Thorne Able for appointment as American consular representative at Sidon, for I can not imagine the Department viewing with favor my proposal for the appointment of a foreigner as "honorary" American representative to the Hejaz.

Mr. Shoiburgh's principal enclosure, though including discussion of a large number of matters of greater interest to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce than to the Department, includes in the appropriate places and in appropriate detail the information requested by the Department's instruction in question. After presenting briefly certain introductory material on the recent history, geography and physical characteristics of the country, he discusses the "General Imports and Exports" of the Hejaz and the "Imports from Shore of Imports". The following section dealing with "Unlisted .....

"Additional Government Revenue" will probably prove of interest, as will the accompanying statistical tables. One of these latter, entitled "Market in the Light for the following American Products not yet introduced or that may be Increased and Estimates for First Year's Business", is a statistical compilation of figures relative to the market of Polish for thirteen commodities each of which is discussed individually in the body of the report. The figures collected as to the pilgrim traffic also are the most complete which I have seen for the past and current seasons and will presumably be found of general interest.

In concluding this brief comment on Mr. Scarbrough's report, I desire to mention one matter, of a political nature, which may cause the Department, as it did me, some surprise. I refer to the statement, made in the first paragraph on page two of his covering letter to me, that "In lieu of causing more ado of commotion and war appliion with the idea of sending the Texas to his destination". I have since enquired particularly of Mr. Scarbrough his authority for this statement. His reply was to the effect that the statement was based, first, on general rumor at Gdynia during his visit, and, second, on a statement thereof received from a Mr. Evans, business Manager at Gdynia for Mr. H. John Phillips, with whom he had talked at some length on the occasion of a short visit which Mr. Evans had made to Egypt last month.

Although I have of no power or authority that would allow credits or warrant denial for such a statement, I cannot but believe, from the general impression

I have .....

I have gained while in Egypt of King Ibn Saud's policy, that the rumor in question has but little if any serious foundation. I am the more confirmed in this belief when I recall a recent statement made last spring by the Hejaz Agent in Cairo, when asked by Mr. Hohsworth as to the possibility of Hejaz-Yemen frontier delimitation, that the question was not really one of any particular or immediate interest to his Government. I cannot but think moreover, that King Ibn Saud, through taking a most optimistic view of his strength at home as a result of his successful operations against dissident tribesmen, would hardly consider his desert Arab levies certain of success in any extensive military action against the hardy mountain tribesmen of Yemen in the latter's - and to his own troops unfamiliar - terrain. And, without a feeling of certainty as to the successful outcome of such an action, I cannot believe that Ibn Saud would jeopardize the reputation for strength and leadership which he has built up amongst his own subjects and tribesmen or the goodwill which his policy of pacification, public security and progress has engendered amongst foreign nations.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Franklin Dyk Gardner.

Enclosure:
As stated,
In duplicate.

A true copy of the signed original

800/31

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790f,90s/23 FOR #18

FROM Baghdad (Sloan) DATED Feb.3, 1930
TO NAME

INDEX BUREAU
890F.00/27

REGARDING:

Handing over by the British of Faisal Ed Dawish and other captives to King Ibn Saud.

W1

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 867n.9111/64 FOR Report #309

FROM Jerusalem (Simon) DATED June 18, 1931
TO NAME

REGARDING:

Order issued by Emir Abdullah of Transjordan and Ibn Saud of the Hejaz and Nejd calling for a cessation of tribal feuds.

890.1068
8-28

I do hereby order you to disseminate this order amongst the tribes in your area with the least possible delay and to inform them that His Majesty Ibn Saud has today issued a similar proclamation.

(Signed)

Abdullah.

The Arab nation which really appreciates its leaders and brave men, should also have a Pantheon.

There is no difficulty which must be solved. The Pantheon which will be erected in the Haram will be available for Moslem leaders alone. But we must remember that among the Arabs there are Moslems and non-Moslems.

But this difficulty has already been solved by the British Government itself. The hero who deserves to be buried in Westminster Abbey, is buried in the cemetary of his own community and the State erects in his honor a statue.

Yes. Let Palestine contain henceforward the body of every leader who, in his lifetime, served Palestine. Let the hearts of all Arabs turn towards Palestine. Palestine will certainly know how to honor all her supporters both during life and after death.

(Note: the only non-Christian whose statue stands in Westminster Abbey is the baptised Jew, the Earl of Beaconfield).

The Palestine Government published the text of an important letter issued by Emir Abdullah of Transjordan and King Ibn Saud calling for a cessation of tribal feuds and threatening punishment upon those who would disobey the order.

TRIBAL RELATIONS IN TRANSJORDAN.

The following is a translation of the text of Emir Abdullah's Order:

"A meeting will be held shortly at Wadi el Sirhan between Captain Glubb, British Intelligence Officer, attached to the Department of Public Security in Transjordan and Sheik Abdul Ibn Zeid, Inspector of tribes in Nejd and Hedjaz. At this meeting all claims with regard to raids which took place between Transjordan and Nejd since August 1, 1930, will be discussed with a view to arriving at a final settlement in connection therewith and also to formulate a general rule for immediate cooperation between the authorities concerned in Transjordan on the one hand and Nejd and Hedjaz on the other, with a view to prohibiting raids in the future.

As an expression of the true intention of the Government of Transjordan in facilitating the success of this meeting and in order to show our cooperation in the maintenance of order and peace on the boundaries, I do hereby prohibit and forbid any and every kind of raiding by the tribes of Transjordan during the sittings of this meeting and at all times hereafter, and do hereby declare that I will punish every person who will contravene this order and make his penalty serve as an example to others.

I do

AM RECD

NO. 586

DEPT. OF STATE
SEP 12 1931
DIV. COM. & REP

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

Jerusalem, Palestine, August 25, 1931.

Copy filed in HA Geog. Sec.

GEOGRAPHIC SECTION
H.A. SEP 12 31
1931

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

SUBJECT: Politics of ~~the Syrian Desert.~~

FOR DISTRIBUTION

Copy to
Legation Bagdad
Consulate Gen Beirut

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Commercial Office (A-2/01)

SIR: Baghdad
Beirut 9/25/31

I have the honor to enclose a memorandum entitled "Politics of the Syrian Desert" which was prepared by Mr. Jacob B. Simon, the Interpreter of the office, after his recent visit to the Wadi Sirhan in Northern Nejd.

It is believed that the information given in this memorandum will be found of interest to the Department. Mr. Simon's sources of information were Sultan Pasha Alatrash, a number of Bedouin Sheikhs, and other reliable and strictly confidential sources.

Mr. Simon has prepared another memorandum on more or less the same subject which will be transmitted as soon as time can be found to type it.

Respectfully yours,

P. Knabenshue,
Consul General.

File No. 800
PK-co

890F.00/29

FILED
OCT 6 - 1931

POLITICS OF THE SYRIAN DESERT.

* * * *

Wadi Sirhan begins at the place in the Syrian Desert where the heights of the Hauran pass into Northern Arabia or Arabia Petrea. It is one of the largest streams in that region and is the natural line of communication between Northern Arabia and the Syrian Desert. The salty nature of the ground seems to show that this region was formerly the bed of a sea lying between the two higher deserts. It is one of the few districts the oases of which provide sustenance for the Bedouin and his flocks during the difficult summer season of Eastern Transjordan and of the Southern Syrian Desert. The desire for control of the Wadi, for both economic and strategic reasons, has been a continual cause of wars between the stronger tribes of Syria and Northern Arabia, particularly between the Rualla, one branch of the Aneyza, the biggest tribe in Northern Arabia and the Syrian Desert and one of the biggest in all Arabia, and the Shommer Tribe, its hereditary foes. Control of the Jauf alamar oases, the southernmost point of the Wadi, the northern point of which is Alazrak in Eastern Transjordan, was an eternal bone of contention between them. The tribal war became a serious feud between the Shaalan family, who rule the Rualla and the Ibn Rashid family of the Shommer till the latter were destroyed by Ibn Saud. In 1911 Nauri ibn Shaalan, sheikh of the Rualla, succeeded in taking Jauf alamar from the ibn Rashids and for some years remained in sole control of the Wadi. But after Ibn Saud had reduced Shommer he recaptured Jauf alamar, thereby taking the control of the /

Wadi

out of Ibn Shaalan's hands.

For a long time it was part of the British plans to join Jauf to Transjordan and use it for the Haifa-Bagdad railway. The subsequent plans were prepared only after the late Sir Gilbert Clayton found it impossible to persuade Ibn Saud to give up Jauf; it was only then that the British decided that the railway should pass through Alazrak. Instead of controlling the entire Wadi they had to content themselves with only the northern mouth. The present boundary between Transjordan and Nejd starts on 31 25' North latitude and goes on a straight line to the intersection of 38 East Meridian with 30 North Latitude. It then follows 38 Meridian to its intersection with 29 35' N.L.

Note
867n.7709

When work started on the realization of the plans for pipe-lines and railway, it affected those places on the borders of Iraq, Nejd and Transjordan through which the railway and pipelines will pass. The direction of activities in this region was entrusted to Captain Glubb, who is reckoned as one of the greatest authorities in respect to the Bedouins and the desert. Before his arrival in Transjordan he had spent several years in Iraq where he had been a very close friend and diligent pupil of the late Gertrude Bell, the well-known British orientalist. Glubb took part in Clayton's mission to Ibn Saud and evinced complete familiarity with Arabia, its tribes and borders. His arrival in Transjordan was announced by the Arabic press under the following headline; "The younger Lawrence in Arabian Lands." Immediately he arrived he set about creat-/

ing

ing a Bedouin legion, which as yet numbers only a few hundred. The legion is somewhat similar to the French Foreign Legion, and is composed entirely of Bedouin from the Nejd and Hedjaz who fled their countries after various misdeeds of the nature of murder and robbery. A large number of them are professional soldiers, many having already fought both for and against Ibn Saud. Local Bedouins are not accepted in this Legion, which is excellently armed and has first-class "dalals" (racing dommedaries). The wages received by members of the legion are higher than those received by any other class of soldiers in Transjordam.

Glubb, whom the Arabs call Abu Knek or as the Bedouins pronounce it Abu Hnetch ("father of the throat," on account of a visible scar) lives the life of the Bedouin. He dresses as a Bedouin, has a tent, camels and sheep moving from place to place and pasturing with the Bedouin herds; his speech is that of a son of the desert born and bred. These facts have made him very popular among the tribes.

Not only does he know the whole of inter-tribal politics; but he is also familiar with the relationships of the sheikhs within the tribes. This aids him greatly in the realization of his purpose---control of the desert through which the pipelines and railway lines must pass. His work is political and his legion gives him an obvious authority which enables him to be prepared for anything that may happen.

He has three moving radio-stations keeping him in touch with the whole desert and with the central authorities in Jerusalem. The Air Force is at his service, and watch is kept of the movements of all tribes. Friendly tribes possess special signs for identification from the air.

In addition it seems that the British are now preparing to go forward with what has been their policy since the demarkation of Ibn Saud's boundaries --- the protection of the boundaries between Transjordan and Arabia more particularly at Wadi Sirhan which is open to any attacks from Arabia. The Arab Press has announced the recent departure of many workers from Amman for the Nejd borders in order to build a fortress in Bayir, which is southeast of the Hedjaz railway and about 200 Km. N.E. of Elat (Akaba). It seems that a chain of such forts will be built across the Syrian Desert linking Elat with the fruitful Wadi Hillal, thus holding Arabia where it meets Iraq and Transjordan. It is the purpose of these forts to protect the pipe and railway lines from all attack from Arabia. The British are apparently finding it necessary to follow the Roman example in this respect, and thus we have history repeating itself in this region in this as in other respects.

The British commended building these forts two years ago and were strongly opposed to Ibn Saud, who claimed that these forts would put an end to the independence of Nejd and would be a continuous threat of attack. At the time a general assembly of the Nejd tribes was held at Riyadh, the capital, and passed resolutions protesting against the construction of the forts by the British. Ibn Saud was present and undertook to make these resolutions forceful. The British stopped building and the matter was dropped. Pressure on Ibn Saud began in the outbreaks and revolts against him on the Nejd-Iraq borders, the most serious of which was that of his former friend and ally Feysal Aldawish. This revolt forced Ibn Saud/ to

to realize that England is not accustomed to relinquishing its aims so lightly, and that the country's internal affairs demanded order at the frontiers. The conquest of Assir with the problems of establishing his authority there, forced Ibn Saud to accept the continued building of the forts in a more philosophic way than previously. The work has been begun at the important strategic point of Bayir, which is also the headquarters of Glubb and his legion, the purpose of which is to prevent a recurrence of the storm with which the first attempt was greeted, two years ago, by Ibn Saud and his allies. The latest treaties between Iraq and Transjordam on the one hand and Ibn Saud on the other have paved the way for these works. British diplomacy has this time succeeded. It has secured the positions which ensure the building of the pipe line and railway from Haifa and Bagdad without disturbance.

And now suddenly at a time of treaties and peace conferences, when it seemed as though the dove of peace itself ruled the desert once for all, clouds have begun to gather over Wadi Sirhan. Rualla Bedouins have attacked the Druzes who live in the two villages of the Wadi, Nebuk and Haditha, near Kiryet Maleh, which are in Ibn Saud's territory.

Those Druzes who fled from Jebel Druze in 1926 with their leader Sultan Pasha Alatrash after their defeat in their revolt against the French first found refuge in Alazrak. But on account of the Anglo-French treaty stipulating that those undesirable to the one in its mandated Territory (Syria or Palestine), should not be permitted to / take

take refuge in the M andated Territory of the other, the British authorities were compelled to shift the majority of the Druzes, about 400 families, including Sultan Pasha Alatrash, from Alazrak to the above-mentioned villages which are beyond the bounds of British Mandated territory. Here they were under the protection of Ibn Saud.

Alazrak

Nothing untoward occurred to them during their stay at Nebuk and Hedithe and they were always on friendly terms with the tribes of the Wadi, which looked on them as "dakhils" (under the protection) of Ibn Saud.

The stay of the Druzes in the Wadi has been marked by material difficulties. They are supported by their kinsfolk in America and live on their poor cattle and flocks, yet despite their situation they remain steadfast in their hatred of France and in their resolve to see their country freed, to which end they had revolted in 1925. The only one to have submitted to the French is Sultan Pasha's brother Hassan Alatrash who was pardoned and now lives in Suweida the capital of Jebel Druze. The exiles all vilify him for his submission; but when account is taken of the collective devotion of this little group of people who call themselves "Muwahadin" (inique), every one of whom is prepared to lose his life for his fellows, a doubt arises whether this submission is due to treachery on the part of Hassan Alatrash. It seems possible that the purpose may be to keep a representative of the Alatrash family on the spot so that no other family may replace it. There may even be more daring schemes in the offing. Be that as it may, Hassam Alatrash is very closely watched by the French, and is little better off than a prisoner.

The attack of the Rualla on the exiled Druzes in Wadi Sirhan was not simply for plunder, for there is very little that the Ruallas, wealthiest Bedouins in the Syrian Desert, can hope to gain from the impoverished exiles. The attack was directed against the Druzes themselves, who, during their revolt suffered more than once from this tribe, which plays a part all its own on the politics of the Syrian desert.

Reception of guests among the Druze in Wadi Sirhan. (Featuring Sultan Alatrash, his brother, the Druze Sheikhs and the Consulate General's Interpreter, in the Royal tent.).

The Aneyza tribe has many branches (Ashair). Of these the most important are: Amarat, in Southern Mesopotamnia; Fidan, on the Euphrates near Deir Ez Zor; Sbaa, near Tadmor (Palmyra); and Rualla, near Damascus and in the South East of the Syrian Desert. The supreme sheikh of the Aneyza is Ibn-Ghazal who is also chief of the Amarat branch; all the other sheikhs of the tribe pay him tribute. The chief of the Rualla, Nuri ibn Shalan is a man without mercy or scruples; very ambitious and desirous of power, honor and wealth, who flinches from nothing to attain his ends and killed one brother with his own hands and ordered the death of another when they

were suspected of plotting against him; he could not bear the presence of a higher power in the tribe, and his disputes with Ibn Ghazel and the other sheikhs on the side of the latter became very serious after the War when political issues began to complicate private quarrels.

The end of the War saw the Syrian Desert become a cauldron. It has had singular strategic importance since the beginning of history. The German scholor Max von Oppenheim ascribes to it the same position in the ancient world as the connecting link between Arabia, Mesoptamia, Syria and Palestine, as has been held by the Suez Canal in respect to East and West. After many centuries Western influence has again become dominent in the Arab countries, and, in consequence of the rapid means of communication afforded by the automobile and aeroplane, and now the proposed railway, the Syrian Desert is once more resuming its position of importance. In this day, control of the desert means control of the most important trade routes in the Near East. It is impossible to delimit the desert by definite frontiers, while the maintenance of an army all around it is beyond the powers of any state. The subjugation of the tribes therefore became the main purpose of British and French policy, in order to strengthen their hold on the desert.

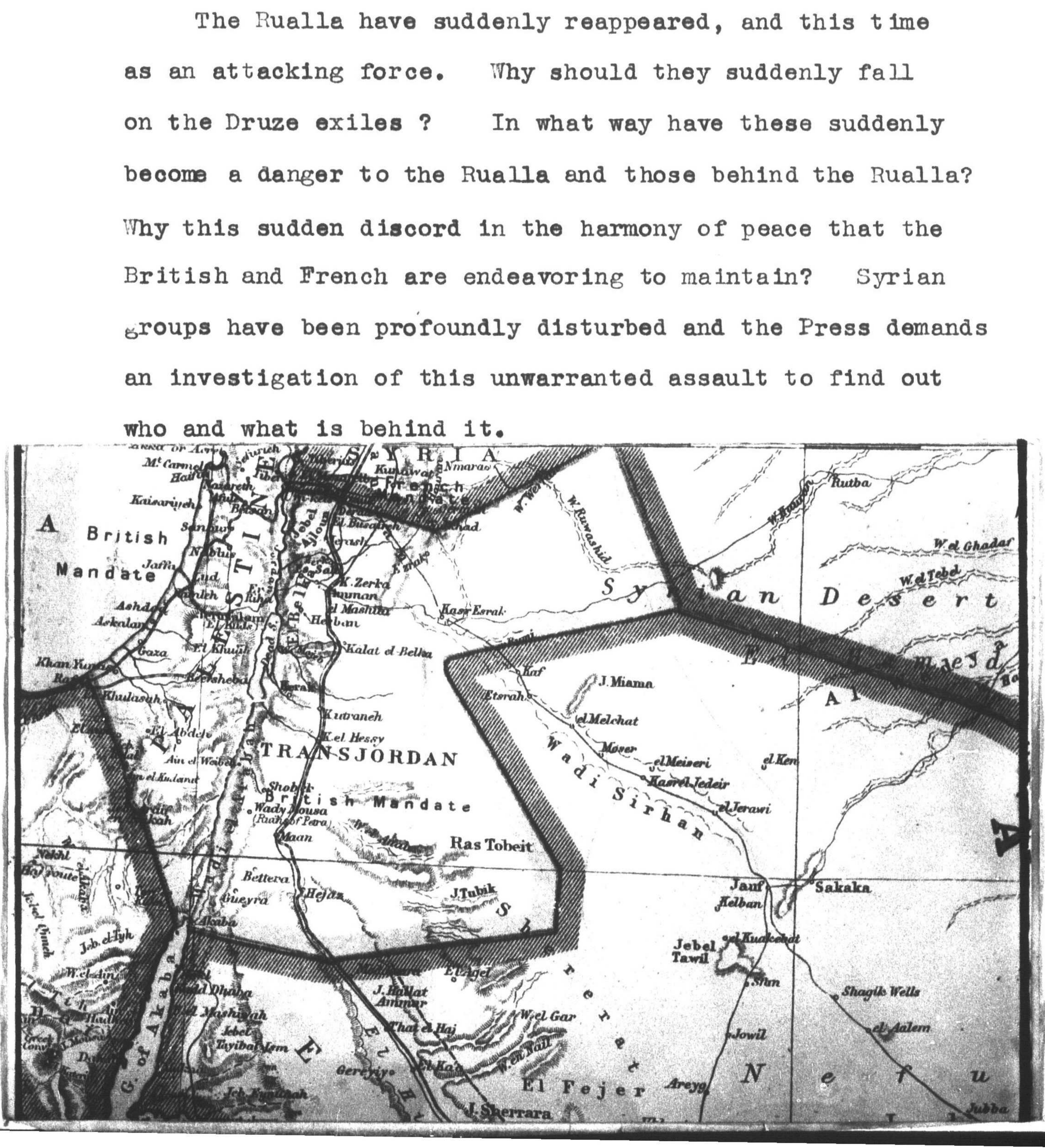
Ibn Ghazal, who spends more time in Bagdad than in the desert and who is honored by Feisal and the British Commissioner, has supported the British ever since their/

arrival

arrival in Iraq, and his influence can be felt throughout the tribe, even where it is on French territory; this support of Britain became evident to all. Nuri ibn Shaalan saw in this a good opportunity for increasing his own political prestige, which he could not do under ibn Ghazal. And so the Rualla broke away from the rest of the tribe and has openly set itself on the side of the French in every dispute with the British since the actual delimitation of the Sykes-Picot frontier. France did not disappoint Nuri whose prestige has steadily risen. Marks of honor, a palace in Damascus and plentiful wealth have all come into his hands. He also served his allies faithfully at the time of the Druze revolt, when he carried out all manner of official and unofficial operations on their behalf. But his foes did not remain idle. A coalition was formed of most of the tribes in Syria, particularly of the Aneyza branches Sbaa and Fiddan and including large tribes such as the Mawali and Haddin, which began to press upon the Rualla. Battles would be fought from time to time in which the Rualla could not withstand the united front of the others, and in which nothing but the aeroplanes and armored cars of the French saved the tribe from an overwhelming defeat. There was such a fight near Palmyra in 1926, and dozens of Bedouins fell on both sides. Things became so serious that in the Spring of 1930 the Rualla had no place left for pasturage in the Northwest of the Hamad (the interior of the Syrian Desert), which had formerly been considered its own country. Nuri ibn Shaalan then sent messengers to Ib Saud asking him for a refuge and pasturage for his tribe. France was unable to

help him, as fresh disturbances were undesirable after the country had been calmed following the revolts of 1925-1926, despite the fact that the fall of Rualla meant a considerable fall of French prestige in the desert. The British, however triumphed. But the joint interests of France and Britain in the pipe and railway lines now make them equally concerned in establishing peace throughout the desert, and so the situation has changed during the past year.

The Rualla have suddenly reappeared, and this time as an attacking force. Why should they suddenly fall on the Druze exiles ? In what way have these suddenly become a danger to the Rualla and those behind the Rualla? Why this sudden discord in the harmony of peace that the British and French are endeavoring to maintain? Syrian groups have been profoundly disturbed and the Press demands an investigation of this unwarranted assault to find out who and what is behind it.



The paths of diplomacy are intricate and hazy. On the one hand the necessity for quieting the desert; on the other, such incidents as the one described. Doubtless, time will show the unwaited, though perhaps, to the outsider, unexpected developments, of what has only just begun at Wadi Sirhan.

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 790f.90 I 15/5 FOR #78

FROM Aden (Walmsley) DATED July 20, 1932
TO NAME 1—1137 ...

890F.00/30

REGARDING:

Internal political aspect of Hajaz.

Quotes an official notice from the UL-EL-QURA, Mecca, which demonstrates the fact that the Government is combating every semblance of disloyalty to the regime.

las

890f.00/30

No. 78.

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Aden, Arabia, July 20, 1932.

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: The Hedjazi border disturbance and the internal political aspect.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to this Consulate's despatches Nos. 67 and 74 of June 26 and July 12, 1932, citing articles from the UM-EL-QURA, Mecca, concerning the invasion of Hedjazi territory along the Transjordan border, and to quote further from the same newspaper, issue of July 1, 1932:

Official Notice

"Hedjaz is primarily a Moslem holy country which all Mohammedans are called upon to visit to perform their pilgrimage ordered by the Almighty. Therefore, Hedjaz is only meant for two purposes, namely, the worship of God and in his holy land and making a living for the upkeep of oneself and family. With the exception of these two purposes the Government forbids the stay in this country of persons having other motives. Hedjaz shall not be considered to be a meeting place for politicians or similar individuals. Any subject of the Hedjazi Government interested in such doctrines shall be punished. Should he be a foreigner and not a Hedjazi subject the Government will not only punish him to the extent of his guilt but will cause his deportation as well.

"There have been these days several rumors concerning the activities of a gang of mischief-makers operating in the north under the leadership of Ibn Rafadah, to whose operations great importance has been attached by the inhabitants of the country as well as by others, in order to spread panic among the inhabitants of the Hedjaz. Such persons have been considered not only the enemies of the Hedjaz but also the enemies of Islam and of Moslems for

spreading

spreading false rumors in this holy country. The Hedjaz is by the grace of God a peaceful country and all tales such as have been spread have had no foundation whatever. The police department has therefore been called upon to punish all persons who have helped to circulate this news. The following persons have been arrested as a result.

From Mecca	From Jeddah
Ali Bin Ahmed Bin Mansoor	Mohamed Mahma
Ali Bin Alhussein Alharthi	Mohieddeen Nazer
Ibrahim Bin Abdulla Dabbagh	Salem Shamo
Esam Bin Abdulla Dabagh	Suleiman Abu Dawood
Ameen Bin Ishaq Bin Aqeel	Abdul Aziz Jameel
Abdul Wahab Ashi	Hamza Shahata
Mahmoog Al-Lahyati	Ahmed Bakhoob Bajabair
	Hassan Awwad
	Mohamed Basiyooti
	Saleh Basiyooti.

"Deportation has already been order in the cases of Hassotah Almaghrabi and Abdulla Saghoor, because it was proved that they helped in circulating the above rumors in the Hedjaz.

"The Government has now formed the following ruling, as a result:

1. No one shall be permitted in this country to interest himself in any talk of a political nature. Those suspected of committing such an offense shall be punished.

2. The formation of parties of any nature, or the establishment thereof in the holy country of the Hedjaz shall not be permitted, and if detected, every member thereof shall be liable to punishment.

"Whoever desires to worship God and to make a living in this country in the usual way shall be left in peace; others will have themselves to blame."

Official Notice

"According to the latest news available with regard to the movements of Ibn Rafadah it is stated that he is reported to be leaving Haql en route to the Gulf of Akaba from which point he will not be able to advance any further. The force sent by way of Hejd is expected to reach the heights to-day and its arrival there will end this trouble, by the grace of the Almighty".

A reading of the first article demonstrates that the disturbance in northern Hedjaz is by no means the localized affair

affair the Government would have one believe, for the authorities would certainly not have arrested 19 persons in Jeddah and Mecca for no other reason than that they have an ingenuous interest in politics. Secret information received from a reliable authority is to the effect that the Government is combating with the greatest zeal every semblance of disloyalty to the regime. Furthermore, Ibn Hafadah penetrated very deeply into Hedjazi territory (probably about 100 miles or more). The town of Haql, mentioned in the second news despatch, is on the north-south caravan route about 30 miles south of Aqaba.

The Protectorate Secretary (Colonial Office official) advised me in confidence today that although he has no proof as to who is backing Ibn Hafadah, he suspects it may be prominent Transjordan Arabs, or Faisal (son of the late Sherif Hussein) himself with one eye closed, one of the immediate objects being the diversion of attention from Asir, where the third son of the deceased Sheikh Mohamed Idrisi, sitting without authority as titular head of the council of state (actually under the thumb of the viceroy at Mecca), is anxious to regain his autonomy or independence. Although Asir is a "dependency" of the Kingdom, it has with time become completely subjugated to Mecca, and if only autonomy is sought, it would be correlated with a movement to place more friendly persons in power in Mecca. In fact, two of the arrested persons appear to be of the same family as that of two persons known to have gone just recently to Gizan (about 42°30' E. and 17° N.) on the Red Sea coast, with large sums of money (one had in his possession, so it is

said

[redacted], [redacted]). If any of the conspirators has foreign holdings, it is [redacted], if not impossible, to learn the nature [redacted] of the present time.

Respectfully yours,

[redacted]

[redacted]

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 867n.9111/81 FOR Report #427

FROM Jerusalem (Simon) DATED July 19, 1932
TO NAME 1—1137

REGARDING: Revolt in Hedjaz.

Sheikh Hamad ibn Rafada, rebel leader in the Hedjaz on way to Mecca with forces to fight King Ibn Saud's forces.

Belief by "CARMEL" an Arab newspaper, that Ibn Rafáda was fortified by external moral and material aid to wage a revolt against Ibn Saud.

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890f.00

NO. 109.

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Aden, Arabia; October 12, 1932.

SUBJECT: Review of Hedjaz-Nejd under Ibn Saoud.

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

FOR DISTRIBUTION — Yes No

I have the honor to report that the official UM-EL-QURA in its issue of September 16, 1932, commemorating its ninth anniversary, reviews Hedjaz-Nejd history during the past year in the following vein:

"The Ninth Year

"It is now the ninth year of UM-EL-QURA's existence. However, it is better to relate to our readers something of the events that have occurred in the Holy Land since the pilgrimage.

"The Trip of H.H. Prince Faisal

"The Government sent abroad a delegation headed by H.H. Prince Faisal. They visited various capitals with which we have political relations. The object of the trip was to cement friendly relations. The delegation consumed three months for the trip, and accomplished useful work during the journey.

"Foreign Policy

"1. Diplomatic relations have been established between the Italian Government and the Government of His Majesty the King. Two treaties, one of friendship and the other of commerce, have been concluded.

"2. Amity treaties have been made with the Governments of Yemen, France, Syria, Lebanon, and Afghanistan.

"3. The Government has adhered to the Treaty of Paris, which is known as 'The Treaty forbidding Wars of Aggression'.

"4. The Government joined the arms holiday for a complete year beginning November, 1931 and ending

October

890F.00/32

October, 1932.

"5. The Government accepted the invitation to attend the Disarmament Conference. It sent its Plenipotentiary Minister in London to represent it, and to carry its Note concerning armaments in the country.

"6. The Government joined the International Office of Public Hygiene at Paris, having already adhered to the 1907 Health Treaty of Rome.

"7. The difficulties between the Yemen Government and ours were solved.

"The Council of Subministers

"A council of this name was recently formed. Prince Faisal was made president. A statute was adopted. Members are responsible to H.M. the King for carrying out his policies towards the Powers.

"The Ministry of the Interior

"The Parquet was divided into two sections; one was annexed to the Council of Subministers, while the other remained as it was and was given the name of Ministry of the Interior.

"The Privy Council

"As the regular session of the Privy Council was adjourned, His Majesty ordered a new session. His Majesty opened the meeting with a speech of wise and moral advice.

"The Reorganization of the Finances

"The conquest of the financial depression was the Government's most important problem. It reorganized the financial department in such a way as to garantee steady progress. It relied upon the internal income of the country. The revenues were divided into four parts; one for the salaries of the employees, one for debts, another for current expenses and a fourth for extraordinary expenses. It subjected all financial questions to the general treasury. New systems were necessarily introduced. Proportional sums were cut from the budgets of all departments.....It promoted the Agency of Finance to a Ministry, for which a special statute was drawn up.....

"Public Security

"The ibn Rafadah incident is the most important one to perplex the minds of the Arab and Islamic worlds in the eighth year. However, the man and his followers met a crushing defeat on the battle field.

Care

"Care of Pilgrims

"Last year the Government paid special attention to the welfare of the pilgrims. The Privy Council was in charge, and did its utmost to make the pilgrims content. The Council enlisted the aid of the intelligent people of the country. Discounts were allowed of the prescribed customs dues. A special committee was directed by the Council to publish a statement of suggestions and advice for pilgrims. In future, it will appear in the form of a booklet in all languages. It will be distributed free.....

"Health

"The Government has already joined the International Hygienic Office at Paris, established by an international agreement at Rome in 1907. The Director General of Health was recently appointed to represent the Government in the Office assemblies.....

"Education

"The Government saw the necessity of opening night schools. It depended upon the graduates of the Saoudi Islamic Institute to teach at night. The schools are four in number, and are situated at the towns of Ma'la, Safa, Harat al-Bab, and Al Ma'abida. In the last a new school was added and the classes have already met.

"Wireless and Post

"By the current year the construction of wireless apparatus in al Ehsa, Bareeda, Tabouk and Al Akeer was already finished. A great wireless station at Mecca in the neighborhood of the High Palace at al Ma'abida, with six kilo power, was installed.

"Directions were isssued for posting parcels, for their inspection, for collection of dues thereon and for their delivery.

"Postal money orders of India, Aden and Palestine are to be accepted.

"The Census

"The Government undertook to make a general census of males in all of the towns of the Hedjaz and committees were formed for the purpose. The head office is at Mecca. Committees have begun their work and are now about to finish.

"Agriculture

"The Government deemed it necessary to help its

people

people and encourage them in agriculture. It brought machinery which it distributed to farmers on the installment system.

"Water

"A new well at Noman was opened.....

"Improvements

"The Government recommended the importation of road graders. The Taif road was repaired. Some of the grades were removed.

"The necessary arrangements were made to construct centers between Jeddah and Mecca for the sale of automobile spare parts. Well equipped rest places on the road were also recently made....."

The statement under "The Reorganization of the Finances" regarding the Government's reliance on the internal income undoubtedly refers to the unsuccessful loan negociations which the Consulate has discussed in previous despatches. Further comments seem unnecessary.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

X

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

NO. 117.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, October 10, 1932.

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: The Press on the Hedjazi political situation.

1—1055 GPO

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOV 9 1932
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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NOV 7 12 1932
U.S. DIV. OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the Hedjazi and Near East Press continues actively to discuss the Ibn Rafadah revolt and other subjects related to the politics of Ibn Saud's country.

Ibn Rafadah

The newspapers in Egypt, Palestine and Syria, it is understood, have been publishing reports and rumors that Ibn Rafadah, announced by the Mecca Government to have been killed in action on July 30, 1932, was still alive and undefeated. In Aden, the opinion is that Rafadah was undoubtedly killed, but that some of his followers probably escaped and were trying to cross the frontier. The British and the Transjordan Governments, and ex-King Ali, who is, or was until recently, the guest of his brother Abdulla at Amman, have come in for their share of the criticism. The official UM-EL-QURA itself, invoking God and His Prophets as witnesses, has displayed most unbecoming excitement over a matter which it attempts at great and stentorian length to minimize. The local British authorities state that they believe that the Ibn Rafadah incident may be considered as closed.

The

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The September, 1932 issue of the ORIENTE MODERNO, Rome, voices the confusion and uncertainty that has confronted observers in the last tw months:

"Arabia- The Arabian situation has unexpectedly become complicated. Ibn Rafadah, aided, it appears, by arms and monies from Transjordan, incited the rebellion against Ibn Saud and, having gathered a following of Bedouin, attempted to develop a movement against the Nejd and the Hedjaz. The Wahhabite reaction was prompt and violent and extremely sanguinary. Ibn Rafadah was routed and slain in the Daba territory, but the rebellions movement was not completely dominated, despite the fact that Ibn Saud announced that calm had returned to the country, and at the same time effected police round-ups in the Hedjaz and various deportations and arrests of suspected accomplices at Jeddah. It is therefore evident that Ibn Saud does not intend to stop and, having completed a considerable concentration of troops, is aiming at assailing Transjordan from Shammer and the west, whence there is a threat on the Sinai Peninsula, towards Aqaba. The English have busied themselves with this region. A considerable concentration of troops and war material have been effected by the British authorities to defend Aqaba, occupying the fort at Bir-as-Seb and the military post at Maan. It appears that the Wahhabites had advanced towards Transjordan, were repulsed by combined British and Transjordan forces, and that there was an encounter between British and Nejdi Mehari forces south of Bir-as-Seb. Information is, however, con tradictory. The very death of Ibn Rafadah is denied. Some would have us believe that he is continuing with success the rebellious operation and that Transjordan continues to aid and abet him or, at least, to block the frontiers to be prepared for any eventuality. On the Wahhabite side the ex-king of the Hedjaz, Ali, brother and guest of the Amir of Transjordan, is accused of directing the movement from Amman, with the intention of recovering the Hedjazi Throne. According to other voices the Wahhabite movement aims purely at anti-British action, and that therefore all Arabia will soon be in flame. It is difficult at present to check the information, which is contradictory and unreliable.

Aqaba

The same issue of the ORIENTE MODERNO states the following in regard to Aqaba:

"The Aqaba question.- Because of Ibn Rafadah's revolt in the Hedjaz and of the precautionary measures taken along the Transjordan boundary, there has been much talk about Aqaba, which in 1925 was detached from the Hedjaz and annexed to Transjordan.

The

"The correspondent of AL-AHRAM of Jaffa, on August 10, confirmed that British military authorities were strengthening the fortifications between Bir as-Seb and Aqaba and not building new ones; in the vicinity of Aqaba two new guard posts had been placed at Ain Weiba and at Ain Deifa; the latter is 270 kilometers from Bir as-Seb (AL AHRAM, August 13, 1932)

"During Ibn Saud's revolt, in July, the rumor circulated that the British were going to take the direct possession of Aqaba in substitution of the Transjordan administration.

"The same correspondent of the AL AHRAM of Jaffa, on August 4, assures that the English have tightened their possession of Aqaba under the pretext of preventing communication with Ibn Rafadah; Aqaba has for some time had great importance 'as the key of the Arabian Peninsula and guardian of the Suez Canal.' It is true that at Aqaba there is a Transjordan <u>quaimaqam</u> (sic) (at the moment Omar Bey el-Maani, successor of Asad Bey, constrained to resign for having consented to Ibn Rafadah's crossing the boundary and pauding at Aqaba).....

"The English are planning a big military station at Aqaba....."

There is no reason to believe that a big military establishment is planned for Aqaba. A landing field, a small garrison to defend it, and an outpost or two, and the occasional call of a Red Sea sloop, are all that need be expected.

As a sample of the recent language of the UM-EL-QURA, excerpts from the September 2, 1932 issue have been selected and are quoted in translation below:

Under "The Abominations of Transjordan", it states

"...The enemies of the Arabs, and the enemies of themselves as well are still persevering in doing wrong. It is wonderful how they invent nonsense. They think falsehood and slander heroic.....

".....they are speaking humbug. They are nothing but animals of the third class....."

<u>Change of Name of the Kingdom</u>

Much space has been given lately in the UM-EL-QURA to the change in name of the Government to the Arabian

Saoudian

Saoudian Kingdom. Flowery prose has flowed explaining how the Ibn Rafadah incident helped crystallize public opinion in Hedjaz and Nejd in favor of greater centralization and unification of government functions to prevent the development of sectional patriotism and to foster the growth and development of a pious spirit of "Arabian" nationality under the generous shadow of the Saoudian family. His Majesty,"was deluged with petitions" to effect the unification, the first step of which was the changing of the name. His Majesty graciously acquiesced to the will of his beloved people. The September 30 issue of the UM-EL-QURA went into some detail in describing the meetings that were held throughout the country to celebrate the change of name. It will be interesting to learn what the royal succession provisions will be. Probably the most significant thing about the so-called unification is the serious attempt of the Wahhabites to reduce the power of its opposition in the Hedjaz. The recent troubles may have revealed the insecurity of the Saoudian regime in the Hedjaz, and the Wahhabites have every intention of holding on to the country and to pilgrimage receipts.

<u>Pilgrims</u>

Concurrent with the unification plans the phans for the welfare of pilgrims have received considerable space in the Mecca paper. Pious Moslems are urged to make the pikgrimage, are furnished information about the facilities made available by the present Government, are given various suggestions and instructions, and are promised a book, to be translated into every language of Islam, to guide them on the sacred voyage. The Consulate hopes to receive a copy of the "guide" as soon as it is published.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Various news items of interest which have appeared in the September 30 and October 7, 1938 issues of UM-EL-QURA will be translated and forwarded as soon as time permits.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

4 Carbon Copies
Received F.P.

NO. 124.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, November 16, 1932.

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Uprising in Asir against Ibn Saoud.

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK Yes No

To the Field

In U. S. A.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Copy to MID

DEC 9 - 1932

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

I have the honor to report that about twenty days ago Sayed Al Hassan Al Idrisi, nominally ruler of Asir under King Ibn Saoud, revolted against the Mecca Government. Hassan seized the Hafayer wells, which are Ghizan's water source, and cut the town's supply. Ibn Saoud's force is reported locked in Ghizan, and the Imam Yehya's military commander in Hodeidah, anxious to leave His Holiness' ill-requited service, is reputed to have offered his services to Hassan. A conference is said to have been arranged in Loheia to discuss terms.

The revolt against Ibn Saoud is officially, at least, a protest of the Idrisi and Asir tribesmen against their incorporation into the Arabian Saoudian Kingdom. Hassan probably foresees the eventuality of his services being completely dispensed with, and the tribesmen, who are a fairly wild lot, presumably have no desire to lose their identity in the United Kingdom.

From the British point of view, the important question is whether the Imam has instigated the Idrisi to revolt.

In

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In view of the offer of the services of his son Ahmed and 15,000 men to Ibn Saoud during the Ibn Rafadah revolt, and of the warm terms in which he congratuled his "brother" King Abdul Aziz on the achievement of Hedjazi-Nejdi unity, "precursor of ultimate Arabian unity", it seems improbable that the Imam is behind the new movement. Not mentioned by the British agents' reports to the Residency is the despatch to the Imam by the Saoudian King of a representative, due to arrive in Sana'a on November 7. The UM-EL-QURA of November 4, 1932 treats this item at great windy length. The article is headed "With the purpose of completing the Unity of Arabian Countries------ New Efforts of His Majesty in the direction of the Ruler of the Yemen". After referring to the many works of His Majesty in the interest of unifying Arabia, and to the treaty concluded at the end of last year between the Yemen and the Hedjaz, the article states "Our King is now trying to negociate with H. M. the Imam" and ".....it is necessary to secure firm and sincere cooperation and consolidation of all independent countries, so that their.....rulers be united and make durable unification treaties." Then it states "It is for this purpose that our King Abdul Aziz follows his sublime policy (sic).....and has sent his representative to Sana'a to deal with such matters."

To the writer it appears much more probable that King Ibn Saoud wishes to assure himself of the Imam's neutrality in the Asir affair.

It is stated for the Department's information that Hassan al Idrisi is the brother of picturesque old Mohamed, former Asir ruler, now dead, and therefore the uncle of

the

the weakling who was expelled by his own people in 1926 and went to live in Jedda or Mecca.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

4 Carbon Copies

Received

NO. 126

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, November 30, 1932

SUBJECT:

The Asir Revolt

DISTRIBUTION -

Copies to the U. S. Consulate, Jerusalem
Legation, Baghdad
Secretary of State, Washington.

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to this Consulate's despatch No. 124 of November 16, 1932 concerning the subversive movement of Sayed Al Hassan Al Idrisi against King Ibn Saoud's authority in Asir, and to continue as follows:

Ibn Saoud's forces, reinforced by contingents sent from the north both by sea and overland, were reported on Tuesday, November 29, to have regained practically complete control of Saoudian Asir. Today, upon the return from Kamaran of the Aden Commandant of Police, the advice was brought that the Idrisi had recaptured Sabya, the Asir political capital, and the Hafayer wells yesterday and were about to reattack Ghizan. The Chief Commissioner and the Political Secretary state, however, that they are uninclined to believe these latest advices.

Local Arabs and the Residency, as well believe that Hassan was routed. The bazar rumor is that the Sayed sought refuge among Saif-al-Islam Ahmed's forces, which have for several weeks been strengthening the Imam's frontier posts in the neighborhood of the revolt. In this connection reference is made to the third paragraph of the Consulate's despatch No. 120 of October 26, 1932, recounting that Ahmed and his soldiers had gone to Nejran. Some informers here state that Hassan has sought asylum among the Bani Bishr, an

AM. CONSUL RECD DEC 22 1932 DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEC 23 1932 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DEC 29 1932

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DECODED JAN 5 1933

an Asir tribe said to have remained neutral in the movement. The events leading up to Sayed Hassan's alleged defeat are recounted as below:

Towards the end of October Hassan, with the support of the Bani Yam, the Masariha, the Marwan and the Rigal Al Ma' tribes, seized the Hafayer wells providing Ghizan's water, and about a week later captured Ghizan, shutting Ibn Saoud's force under the Amir Fahd bin Zuaiyar in the local fort. The force capitulated in about three days, but shortly thereafter Saoud's reinforcements, said to number over 1,000, of which one-half came by water, recaptured Ghizan on November 24 without bloodshed. Ibn Saoud's forces thence proceeded to Sabya and drove the subversive leader from his last stronghold. It is said that during the early part of the revolt Sayed Hassan sent a contingent to take Kunfidah, where the Amir and Ahmed Fitini, the Zeranik leader crushed a few years ago by the Imam Yehya, fell momentarily into the rebels' hands.

The causes of the movement are enumerated by British and Arab observers as follows:

1) The outright annexation of Asir by Ibn Saoud in 1931 in contravention of the "protectorate" agreement with Mohamed Al-Idrisi, the present leader's deceased brother.

2) The strengthening of the appointed Governor's power at the expense of the Idrisi's prerogatives.

3) The cessation of Mecca's allowance to Hassan about six months ago.

4) The attempt to crush individual identity of the Asir tribes by their incorporation into the Arabian Saoudian Kingdom.

5) The alleged cruelty of Ibn Saoud's Governor, who is said to have had certain Ghizan and other notables publicly flogged.

6) The reported refusal by Ibn Saoud of the Asir request for the release of Sayed Ali Al-Idrisi, who succeeded his father Mohamed for a short time in 1925

1925 and is now held hostage in Ryadth.

Attention is respectfully invited to the last paragraph of the Consulate's despatch No. 87 of July 20, 1932, wherein an attempt was made to establish the connection between suspected subversive activities in Asir and the Ibn Rafadah trouble in the north. The suggestion of the Residency is that Hassan badly timed his rising, and that the present movement is definitely an aftermath of the preceding one. 787 890F.90/15/5

Memoranda received by the Residency on November 27, from Jerusalem, are to the effect that Ibn Saoud is no longer short of funds. If the allegation is true, no one in the Residency is willing to suggest whence his financial support may have originated.

The activities of the British in Hadramaut at present lend weight to the rumors of dissatisfaction in Oman. As the Department knows, there is a strong Wahhabite element in the neighborhood of Sur, south of Mascat. British strength alone maintains the Sultan's authority in this district. Squadron Leader A. R. M. Rickards, O.B.E., A.F.C., Intelligence Officer of the Air Staff, Aden, has been in Hadramaut almost two months and one of his purposes is the preparation of a series of new landing fields to complete the section to Merbat, and to Oman which is now skirted by the Imperial Airways India line. Efforts are being made to bring some of the leading tribes to adopt a more friendly attitude towards the English, and a new Sultan of Qishn and Socotra, to succeed the ruler who died five or six months ago, has been elected through the mediation of two representatives of the Residency. The chain around Arabia is being strengthened.

Respectfully

Respectfully yours,

W. M. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

800
WMW/

NO. 24

AMERICAN CONSULATE, GENERAL,

Jerusalem, Palestine, December 1, 1932.

AM RECD DEPT. OF STATE DIV. COM. & FIN. DEC 21 1932

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEC 27 1932 ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEC 22 1932 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Confidential.

SUBJECT: Revolt in Assir.

1—1055 GPO

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK. Yes No

To the Field 2

In U. S. A. 2

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to Aden Baghdad 12/28/32

THE HONORABLE Copy to

THE SECRETARY OF STATE, Consulate, Legation, Baghdad

WASHINGTON.

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MID Mra

SIR:

DEC 28 1932

I have the honor to report to the Department that during the last few days many rumors have been received in Jerusalem concerning a revolt in Assir, a small buffer state between Ibn Saud's kingdom and the Yemen which has, during late years, fallen under the control of that sovereign.

Rumors from Amman are to the effect that the revolt is serious; that the rebels, after some fierce encounters with Government troops, have captured many places; that Hassan il-Idrissi, the nominal ruler of Assir, is accompanying the rebel forces; and that Ahmed Seif il-Aslam, the Crown Prince of Yemen, is encamped with a large force of his father's troops on the border of Yemen and is carefully watching the trend of events. Rumors from Syria are also to about the same effect. However both the Syrian and the Transjordanian sourcew, in any report concerning

conditions

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FILED JAN 9 1933

conditions in the Kingdom of the Hedjaz-Nejd, are usually biased, as the Hashimite family has many friends in both countries.

However, a report was recently printed in Umm Al Kura, Ibn Saud's official organ which is published at Mecca, to the effect that certain tribes near Jeizan are disturbing the public peace; that Said il-Idrissi, the nominal although not the virtual rule of the territory, is behind this movement and that Hedjazi troops have been sent to restore peace in that section.

While it seems a fact that there is trouble in Ibn Saud's territory, the Consulate General has learned from sources considered reliable that the present "revolt" in his territory is no more serious than was the revolt of Ibn Rafada and that the King is permitting the local gendamerie to handle the matter.

Rumors have also been received to the effect that Italy is concerned in this movement, and that the rebels are using Italian rifles and ammunition. In fact, several letters from anonymous writers to this effect have been published in the local papers. The Consulate General is not inclined to place much credence in such information as the Italian Government is usually accused of having a hand in any disturbances in this section of the world. As a matter of fact, the Consulate General has been informed through local sources that the real cause of the present trouble was a controversy between Hassan il-Idrissi and the Hedjazian Commissioner in Assir, and believes that this so-called "revolt" will be squelched

in

in the near future.

Respectfully yours,

Alexander K. Sloan

Alexander K. Sloan,
American Consul.

Copies to:
American Embassy, London.
M.I.C., Paris.

File No. 800
AKS/ch

2

L.J.M.

NO. 127.

RECD
DEPT. OF STATE
COM. & C.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, December 6, 1932

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In U. S. A.		

Copy to Consulate Gen., Jerusalem

SUBJECT: The Asir revolt.

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Commercial Office A.C/CF
To Jerusalem
1/19/33

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON.

JAN 19 1933

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JAN 13 1933
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

890F.00/37

I have the honor to report that an advice received today by the Aden Residency from its acting agent in Hodeidah states, in connection with the disturbance in Asir, that the rumors of Sayed Al-Hassan Al-Idrisi's recuperation, since the arrival of King Ibn Saoud's soldiers, are entirely unfounded, and that the rebellious leader is seeking asylum among friendly interior tribes. The advice this week from Hodeidah came from an acting agent because the agent himself had been sent by the Residency to Sana'a with the supposed purpose of following the negotiations between the Imam Yehya and King Ibn Saoud's representative (see this Consulate's despatch No. 124, 34 November 16, 1932).

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JAN 9 1933

It has become a platitude to cite the lack of communications in Arabia in discussions of Arab unity. Yet the part of the automobile in Ibn Saoud's swift campaigns against dissident tribes appears of such importance that one is permitted to wonder whether this very modern means of transportation may not play a leading role in the eventual consolidation of the Saoudian empire, if not in

unification

unification of the Peninsula. The troops that were sent overland to Asir went in automobiles.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

No. 32

IN

AE

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Jerusalem, Palestine, December 7, 1932.

DEPT. OF STATE DIV. COM. & REC. DEC 30 32

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK

	Yes	No
To the Field		
In U. S. A.		

Copy to MID
Consulate Cypher Mess

SUBJECT: FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING THE REVOLT IN ASSYR.

JAN 17 1933

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A-O-D JAN 3 1933 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE JAN 3 1933 DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to despatch No. 24 dated December 1, 1932, concerning the revolt in Assyr and to transmit to the Department further information recently received from reliable sources as to the situation in that section of Ibn Saud's kingdom.

Assyr has a population of about one million and in the past this country has been a bone of contention between King Ibn Saud and the Imam Yehya of Yemen. The hold of the Emirs of Assyr, the Idrissi, began to be weakened as early as 1923, the date of the death of the Emir Mohamed Il Idrissi. At this time Ali, the former Emir's son, took over the Government of the country and, being a weak ruler, was attacked by the Imam Yehya who soon captured a number of Assyr's principal cities along the coast and even succeeded in capturing Jeizan, a city far in the interior. In this crisis of Idrissi rule the Emir turned to King Ibn Saud, sending to Riad a deputation of his principal Emirs and

/petitioning

JAN 9 1933

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petitioning the Wahabi sovereign to expel Imam Yehya's forces from his country. Ibn Saud was not unwilling to undertake this task but insisted that the territory of the Idrissi should become a protectorate of his own kingdom's and an agreement to this effect was signed in 1926. Since that time Ibn Saud has established in the Assyr territories his own representative, whose title in Arabic corresponds to that of the High Commissioner. Since that time also the Yemenite troops have been withdrawn from the country, but the outstanding questions between Imam Yehya and Ibn Saud on the one hand and Ibn Saud and the Idrissi Emirs on the other have not been finally settled.

Sultan Mohamed Idrissi joined with the various Arab tribes in the concerted attack against the Turkish Government in April, 1915, during which month he signed a treaty with the British. By the terms of this treaty the British Foreign Office undertook to furnish the Idrissi with arms and money and guaranteed to protect their ports from any attacks. The Sultan then led ten thousand of his warriors against the Turks and succeeded in extending the boundaries of his Emirate to a large extent. In January, 1917, he signed a supplementary treaty with the British with respect to the Island of Farsan, which his forces had captured from the Turks. The British were much interested in this island which is said to contain large oil pools which they tried to exploit but which up to the present time they have been unable to work owing to various political factors.

In 1931 Imam Yehya and Ibn Saud entered into an agreement whereby the latter waived claim to some hill territory (the Aaro mountains) on the Emir's frontier in favor of the Imam and the Imam Yehya agreed on his part to

/yield

yield all his so-called rights to the rest of the territory of Assyr in King Ibn Saud's favor.

Most of the reports received in Jerusalem concerning affairs in Ibn Saud's territories are unreliable for the reason that they emanate from territories in which the Hashimite family is popular. Consequently the rumors which were reported in the despatch referred to in the opening paragraph of this despatch must be taken as representing statements from interests directly opposed to Ibn Saud. As the Department will recollect, these rumors were to the effect that the revolt was serious and that the rebels were being instigated in their action by the Italians and being supplied with arms and munition from that country. The more reliable portion of that report was to the effect that the revolt was local only and could be easily handled by Ibn Saud's local forces.

In an effort to find out the truth of the situation a representative of this office was sent to interview Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, formerly an adjutant of Ibn Saud but now a member of the Arab Executive in Jerusalem, who is supposed to be well versed in affairs pertaining to Ibn Saud's kingdom. Auni Bey informed this representative that Italy had been very much vexed by Ibn Saud's refusal to consider its proposition to exploit the oil resources in the Farsan Island and to build an aerodrome there. He did not believe, however, that Italy was concerned in the revolt in Assyr but declared that in his opinion it was caused, firstly, by the failure of Ibn Saud to pay the annual grant-in-aid to the Idrissi Emirs owing to the depleted resources of his Kingdom and,

/secondly

secondly, because the Emirs had learned of their country's annexation as part of the empire of Saoudieh-Arabia and objected on the ground that their country was a protectorate only.

From other reliable sources the Consulate General has learned that the present revolt in Assyr is nothing but a local movement similar to the Ibn Rifada revolt of last summer. It has also learned that the immediate cause of the revolt was a personal controversy between Hassan Il Idrissi and the Hedjazian High Commissioner in Assyr. However, it is believed that Hassan Il Idrissi's forces were assisted by Hedjazian tribes of the vicinity. News lately received is to the effect that Hedjazian forces have captured certain cities of Assyr, that the situation appears to be well in hand and that the rebellion will be put down as easily as was the rebellion of Ibn Rifada.

Respectfully yours,

Alexander K. Sloan

Alexander K. Sloan,
American Consul.

File No. 800
AKS/ca

NO. 131.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, December 14, 1932.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JAN 1933
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: The Hedjazi Government version of the Asir revolt.

Copy Transmitted by The Commercial Office (AGO/C) To Jerusalem 4/19/33 CP

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	Yes	No
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THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

RECD DEPT. OF STATE 12 1 PM 1932 DEPARTMENT OF STATE A-C COM 1 1933 ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

JAN 19 1933 CP Bf

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SIR,

I have the honor of referring to this Consulate's despatches Nos. 124, 126 and 127 of November 16 and 30, and December 6, 1932, describing the revolt in Asir against King ibn Saoud, and to quote below in translation the official communique of the Hedjazi Government issued November 20, and published in the UM-EL-QURA of Mecca on November 25, 1932:

"1st. It is known that in accordance with the correspondence, decisions and conferences which took place during Jomadi II, 1349 (March, 1930) between Sayed Al-Hassan Al-Idrisi and his consulative assembly on the one hand, and our Royal Majesty's Government on the other, Sayed Al-Hassan Al-Idrisi and his consultative assembly relinquished the administration of their country (in the same manner as prescribed by the Treaty of Protection signed at Mecca on Rabia II, 1345 (October 21, 1926)) in favor of His Majesty our King; that this relinquishment was accepted and confirmed by His Majesty's decree of Jumadi II 29, 1349 (March 29, 1930), by which terms of the following nature were decided upon: the kind of administration, duties and attributes of each, Sayed Al-Hassan, the consultative assembly, the Governor, and the Director of Finances of the Province. And this decree was put into effect on the date last stated above.

"2nd. During the period since the new order of things was created, not only had nothing occurred to disturb the administration or the fiscal operations, but everyone enjoyed ease, peace and general good order which substituted the previous anarchy; and though no complaints were registered

against

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against the Governor and subordinates, who, in the execution of their instructions paid Sayed Al-Idrisi all the respect due his rank and honor, yet it seems that a personal animosity arose between Sayed Al Hassan and the present Governor, Fahd bin Zouayir, the former of whom protested that the latter had not shown in his presence the respect due a person of his (Hassan's) rank.

"3rd. Some persons took advantage of the animosity by fishing in troubled waters and intriguing between Al-Hassan and the Governor, with the result that every shred of friendship and sympathy between the two was dissipated, and in consequence at the beginning of this month Hassan submitted his complaint against the Governor, but at the same time, before receiving His Majesty's reply, required that the Governor be suspended from his office and that the administration be consigned to himself; and to this effect he telegraphed His Majesty on Friday, Rajeh 12, 1351 (November 10, 1932) assuring His Majesty of his loyalty and of that of the inhabitants of the Province and advising that the only trouble was caused by the Governor's misbehavior. He also denied knowledge of any one in the country either fomenting rebellion, undermining Government, or advocating secession from the Kingdom, and he requested insistently upon the despatch of a new Governor whose arrival would restore peace and tranquillity.

"4th. Despite the fact that His Majesty's Government has many documents proving that enemies of these two Islamic Arab countries (Hedjaz and Asir: translator's note) were attempting to fan the flame of revolution in the Province of Asir, and that these same people were supporting the lost "Bin Rafadah" to his rebellion, those same spies or messengers of ill-luck are here now exciting these people and misleading them by false promises. The Government at first declined to believe the information that Al-Hassan would follow the advice of these evil counsellors and act in such a low, repulsive and mean manner, but later invited Al-Hassan to declare for himself if he was loyal and sincere and stated that it would, before sending the new Governor, send a commission to Asir to hear Al-Hassan' complaints personally and to inquire into the relations between the latter and the countries' enemies. Sayed Al-Hassan agreed to the conditions and in the most respectful, submissive manner declared to accept the said commission's eventual decisions.

"5th. The commission left for Asir accompanied by military forces sufficient for any decisive action that might become necessary, as Al-Hassan's

sincerity

sincerity was suspected. When the commission arrived at the markets of Al-Kamha, it was presented with documents of unistakable authenticity proving that the first telegrams from Al-Hassan to His Majesty had as object the calming of opinions; that he was indeed inciting rebellion; that the messages of peace and submission were intended to delay government action as he was expecting promised reinforcements; that he had written to the tribes that had promised assistance, asking them to delay by whatever means the arrival of the Government troops at Ghizan and to destroy the road practicable by automobiles; and finally that Hassan had accepted the proferred assistance of certain banned and untouchable persons.

"6th, Hassan, seeing that his plot was discovered and that further delay would net him nothing, refused to meet the commission and fled from Ghizan to Sabya. His Majesty's troops entered Ghizan on the morning of Rajeb 18, 1351 (November 16, 1932) when the friends of the Idrisi fled from the hostility of the tribes and the Idrisi stopped in Sabya asking for mercy. But the Government troops also occupied Sabya determined to terminate the new troubles fomented by Al-Idrisi, misled by the enemies of the country and of Islam. The Government is now taking the necessary steps to prevent repetition of such events and to make peace reign again in the country."

Reliable advices from Sana'a, repeated to the undersigned last night, report that the Imam and Ibn Saoud see eye to eye at present, and presumably neither would be displeased if the Idrisi, who has always been at least a religious rival, were definitely eliminated politically. It appears that if efforts have been exerted to maneuver the Yemeni and Hedjazi rulers into opposing camps, they have failed this time, despite the eventual clash that many observers consider unavoidable.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

NO. 140.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, January 10, 1933.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 1 1933
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

PM RECD DEPT. OF STATE FEB -1 33

SUBJECT: The events in Asir.

FOR DISTRIBUTION - CHECK

	Yes	No
To the Field		
In U. S. A.		

Copy to M I D Consulate Gen, Jerusalem

THE HONORABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Jerusalem 2/7/33 Pol Cp

FEB 7 - 1933

890F.00/40

I have the honor to refer to this Consulate's despatch No. 131 of December 14, 1932, and to previous despatches, concerning the movement of Sayed Al-Hassan Al-Idrisi of Asir against King ibn Saoud, and to relate that Khalid bin Louy, commanding the 15,000 men alleged to belong to ibn Saoud's punitive expedition, died at Abha towards the end of December and was succeeded in the command by his son Saad, who also succeeded to the Governorship of Kharma (UM-EL-QURA, Mecca, December 30, 1932).

According to information in private letters, the Idrisi has taken refuge among the still insubmissive Masariha tribe (in the neighborhood of Ghizan), and the punitive expedition has as a consequence razed the three villages of Taashar, Musina and Madaya, all of whose inhabitants were slaughtered. The women and children had already been evacuated. The UM-EL-QURA, referring to the action of the Bani Shoubeyl section of the Masariha tribe in harboring the Idrisi and refusing submission when all other Asir tribes had already declared their submission, states that the Government has issued orders to punish the rebels immediately in order to end the rebellion completely.

FILED FEB 11 1933

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

890F.00

SEE 846a.9111/50 FOR #154

FROM Aden (Walmsley) DATED Mar.13, 1933

NAME

TO

1—1127

/41

REGARDING:

Revolt in Asir.

Status of -. Quotes article from ORIENTE MODERNO concerning death of Khalid bin Louy.

WI

5

The Revolt

Except for a small section of mountainous country where Hassan Al-Idrisi is said to be still in safe refuge, Asir is quiet. In connection with the report in the Consulate's despatch No. 140 of January 10, 1933 of the death of Khalid bin Louy, the following excerpt from the January issue of the ORIENTE MODERNO, Rome, which credits AL-MUQATTAM, Cairo, for the information, is of some historical interest:

> "This man (Khalid), in company with Sultan ibn Bigiad, sheikh of the 'Ateibah tribe of the Hejaz, who was imprisioned and sent to Riyadth at the time of the revolt of Faisal ibn Dawish in Nejd, and whose end is unknown, was one of the Hejazi chiefs who facilitated ibn Saoud's conquest of the Hejaz. He was one of the Abdali sherifs, sheikhs of Turabah and al-Kharma, which, situated on the boundary between Nejd and Hejaz, were the objects of dispute between the two Governments.

During

"During the European War he fought with the sons of Hussein, Sherif of Mecca, and took part with the Emir Abdullah in the siege of Medina; then, differences having cropped up between himself and the Hashemite family, he withdrew from their territory, got in touch with Ibn Saoud and adhered to Wahhabism. In 1920 while the Emir Abdullah rested at Turabah with a powerful army headed towards Nejd, Khalid ibn Louy and Sultan ibn Bigiad, coming from Nejd, fell precipitately on him [redacted] surprise assault, destroyed his army and captured enormous booty. The Emir Abdullah barely saved himself and a few followers, like Sherif Shakir.

"In 1924-1925 Khalid ibn Louy and Sultan ibn Bigiad, (both) Hejazi, played a principal part in the conquest of Hejaz; Ibn Saoud was taken by surprise and incredulity by the news of the capture of Mecca and there joined him from Riyadth a few days after Khalid ibn Louy had taken possession of the place.

"It should be noted that Khalid ibn Louy was always loyal to Ibn Saoud, while other chiefs, such as Sultan ibn Bigiad and Faisal ed-Dawish, rebelled against him. He had in addition an excellent knowledge of Asir and of its inhabitants and enjoyed the full confidence of ibn Saoud. His loss is therefore very serious to the Kingdom of Saoudi Arabia."

Not much news of Hassan al-Idrisi himself has come out of Asir. However, the January 20, 1933 issue of UM-EL-QURA reported him in the village of Abou Hajar, about eight hours southeast of Abu 'Arish. "Steps have been taken to blockade and seize him," the paper states, yet to date nothing has been heard of him.

The ORIENTE MODERNO, February, 1933 basing itself on the January 12, 1933 AL-AHRAM, writes as follows:

"The Egyptian Sheikh Mohamed al-Ghuneimi et-Taftazani exhorts the leaders of the Saoudi Government to consider that the inhabitants of Asir, owners of their own country, are Muslems and Arabs and should be treated with humanity and clemency. It was in its time reported that Arab boys played ball with ibn Rafadah's head; perhaps they (the rulers) wish the same game to be repeated with the head of the nephew of the learned and venerated mystic Ahmed (sic) ibn Idrisi?

"Ibn Saoud in his relations with the Idrisi should have at least that respect which we see by covenants observed by colonizing Europe towards the chiefs and

emirs

emirs or of southern Arabia, India and Java. He should make better selections of governors and above all see that justice is administered."

The UM-EL-QURA early in November, at the time the first news of the Asir trouble began reaching Aden, announced the arrival in Hodeidah of a Hejazi delegation sent in the interests of "Arabian Unity". Nothing more was ever heard in Aden of this mission, whose function was generally taken for granted locally to be to keep the Iman neutral vis-a-vis Asir and negotiate a further agreement regarding that territory. In the Ramadan (Dec.29/32 - Jan.27/33) issue of AL-IMAN a brief note was made of the delegation's visit:

"The Representatives of King Abdul Aziz in Sana'a

"During the past month there arrived at the capital a commission of representatives composed of Sheikh Mohamed bin Dervi and his companions carrying a letter addressed to our Lord the Imam-God bless him - from His Royal Majesty. The said representatives were placed in the King's guest house, and received all due honors and regalia during their stay. Sheikh Mohamed bin Dervi had the honor of being received by the Imam and of presenting the royal message. The guests were warmly received by the Imam, and repeated visits were exchanged. During his last visit (Sheikh Mohamed) received the reply to the letter after which he departed from the capital while due honor was paid him. We wish him a good journey."

NO. 160.

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, April 5, 1933.

SUBJECT: Asir, and Yemeni-Hejazi relations.

1—1935 GPO

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 26 1933
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
APR 26 1933
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I have the honor to refer to the Hejazi mission that arrived in Sana'a in early November, 1932, a subject discussed in this Consulate's No. 124 of November 16, 1932. In view of the contents, of which some is quoted below, of an article in the February 17, 1933 UM-EL-QURA, it seems that some sort of Yemeni-Hejazi treaty negotiations are in progress; their nature, aside from pious references to the desirability of Arabian unity, is obscure. Not even the Residency appears to be informed in the premises as yet (March 31). That Asir has been the cause of the negotiations (and may prove their poison) is more than probable.

Witness the Imam's reply:

> "...we have advised of the special representative sent to Sana'a to present His Majesty the Imam.....the royal message.....
>
> "...His Majesty's representative has returned....bringing the reply of the Imam....
>
> ' (lengthy salutations and blessings)...Your letter has been handed me by your intelligent servant Mohamed bin Daowy...I have read your letter word for word, have fully turned it over in my mind, and have highly appreciated your laudable principles. What you point out is exactly my own ideal and unique purpose....No one can deny that mutual assistance doubles the strength of both of us and
>
> diminishes

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> diminishes that of our pretentious enemies.... if it were not for Europeanization amongst our people Islam would have been unaffected and our people much stronger..... I agree with the text of the four articles of your proposal, as well as with your additions thereto....'"

The letter ends with the Imam asking for a delegate with full powers to be sent to Yemen to draw up a final treaty and sign it.

As I stated above, I have been unsuccessful in my efforts to obtain an inkling with regard to the true contents of the treaty, but I am prepared to believe that it may make windy reference to unity, and perhaps contain more specific previsions of a political, geographic and even personal nature regarding Asir. In all events some arrangement must be made, whether through formal treaty or otherwise, to dispose of the Asir leaders, including Hassan (whose name however, is omitted from the Mecca paper), who have been given asylum in the Yemeni port of Midi. The UM-EL-QURA of February 24 writes of the work of pacification being undertaken in Asir, and of the punishment being meted out to leaders, tribesmen and so on, and to be visited upon the refugees on their return. Of course the refugees will not be returned without ample garanty of the safety of their necks.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley jr.

W. N. Walmsley jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800.
WNW/MSM

Office of Economic Advisor
JUN 29 1933
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 5 1933
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

NO. 162 STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

AMERICAN CONSULATE,

Aden, Arabia, April 12, 1933.

SUBJECT: Saudian Political and Financial Problems.

FOR DISTRIBUTION

SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Copy & translation Rpts to Commerce (strictly confidential) Rpts

JUL 6 1933

890F.00/43

I have the honor to refer to the several reports of economic projects in the course of study in the Hejaz and of which the Consulate has already given the Department intelligence, and to submit the following:

We have heard anent the Hejaz during the last month or two of the following concessions, intended or granted, and projects "for the development of the country": 1) a central bank, 2) concession to the ex-Khedive Abbas Hilmi Pasha, the bank backer, to exploit "the resources of the country", 3) the Jedda-Mecca railway, 4) mineral concessions to the Standard Oil Company of California, and possibly to other American concerns, through K. S. Twitchell and a certain Mr. Hamilton, 5) petroleum concession to the Iraq Petroleum Company, and 6) the freedom of entry into Saudi territory of all Russian merchandise, to be marketed by the Vostgostorg. These promises and projects are of sufficiently far reaching economic and political effects to merit serious attention.

The sudden outcrop of economic plans may be interpreted as the first major crack in the Saudi organization. A

succession

succession of poor pilgrimages, culminating in the present disastrous one, seems to have forced ibn Saud's hand. He has fought off English loans under their conditions, has managed to conclude honorable treaties with neighbors and certain European powers, and has otherwise held his head high, but neither he nor his government could be expected to last much longer without money. He is now pandering to foreigners, offering anything upon which his hand may fall, in return for funds. Let us examine the situation.

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890F.51
890F.51/1

The central bank, latest and reliable information reveals, is to be known as the Royal Arab Privileged Bank, and is to have a capital of 1,000,000 gold soverigns, guaranteed initially for the entire sum by the ex-Khedive, and subsequently, it is believed, to the extent of £200,000 gold, which is the sum to be put immediately into the hands of the king. One hundred thousand is to be made available, reports add, to Hejazi (Jedda) commerce. It will have the sole right of issue, which will be backed, it is said, 100 per cent; it will have its seat in London with and English chairman and it will have an English general manager in Jedda, where H. St. J. Philby will be bank's counsellor and, it seems, direct representative of the shareholders. The capital, other than Hilmi Pasha's, will be subscribed by English and Swiss interests, and possibly later French and Italian capital may be invited to participate (this probably if and when more money is needed). It is suggested (I cannot vouchsafe even the probability of the accuracy of the intimation) that Abbas Hilmi Pasha represents a group of English Zionists. The loan of £200,000 to the Saudi government will be reimbursable in 15 years. The bank contract was signed by the Saudi government, and Abdul Hamid Bey Shedeed, representing the ex-Khedive, about March 7. A secret agreement said to have been signed at the same time grants exclusive right to the bank to exploit, either directly or

through

through subsidiaries, all the mineral resources of the country.

Abdul Hamid Bey Shedeed is reported to be the former "native" manager in the Levant of the Banco di Roma. Ibn Saud evidently needs money urgently. The little subversive movements led by Rifadah and Hassan al-Idrissi (the latter, with his followers, granted asylum at Midi, Yemen, have, upon the direct request of the Imam Iehya) been granted complete pardon and immunity if they return to their homes) have apparently had their effect, and it is irrelevant to investigate them further to discover who backed them.

From the foreign point of view it appears that a means has finally been found by the English of extending their influence more surely over the country, and that very possibly the ex-Khedive is buying ibn Saud's support of the former's aspirations to the Syrian throne. From here it is impracticable to attempt to define the British view of the former Khedive's pretensions, but their position should not necessarily be irreconcilable in regard to their old enemy.

The bank, reputedly scheduled to open this month, will put the Dutch bank (Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij) out of business.

The Jedda-Mecca railway has been treated in the Consulate's reports Nos. 84 and 86 of April 3 and 10, 1933. 890F.77/9 Suffice it to say that reliable persons have been unable to visualize any profit whatever in the enterprise if it is undertaken under the conditions of the concession. Only, they say, an extraordinarily large pilgrimage, such as has not been seen for years, would leave it with a profit. The government's object, therefore, would appear to be merely to encash the original price of the concession. As for the King's agreement to forbid automobile traffic for hire between the two cities once the railway is inaugurated, Jedda diplomatic observers appear to be sceptical. 890F.77

The mineral concessions reported granted or about to be granted to 890F.602 890F.63

to American interests, to the Iraq Petroleum Company, and to the Royal Arab Privileged Bank, appear to be mutually irreconcilable, or, at the very least, overlapping in respect of rights and privileges. In each case a price is presumably asked for the contract. It is reliably reported to the Consulate that the Americans in Jedda, who had arrived with high hopes probably based on the results of promises, real or imaginary, given Mr. Twitchell prior to his departure for the United States last May, have now frankly avowed that the possibility of their concluding an agreement with the government is now more remote than ever. In any case, the fact that there are at least three groups negotiating with the Government indicates that the latter, which had so long taken an unequivocally antagonistic position in respect of concessions to foreigners and non-Muslims, must recently have changed its view radically and intimated that it was ready to bargain. It is probable that the bank group will come out ahead; in fact, it appears that it has already an agreement, and it is improbable that the Iraq Petroleum and American representatives, presumably familiar with local conditions and with the Orient, will have the wool pulled over their eyes.

The decrees issued in early March granting permission to the Soviet to import without restriction may have the most drastic effects on the country. In 1927 the Soviet inaugurated a steamship line from Odessa to the Persian Gulf via Jedda, Port Sudan, Hodeidah and other ports. As it carried no freight to Jedda, where the entry of Russian goods was forbidden, its reason for calling there was obscure. In 1931 the Hejazi government and the Soviet trade organization (through, it is believed, the Russian minister to ibn Saud) signed an accord for the delivery in Jedda of 104,4000 cases of kerosine and gasoline. This was at the time that the Shell Oil and the Standard Oil were reported pressing for payment of their accounts with the government.

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Government. On the Soviet deliveries, the Saudi Government owes some £30,000. The time had come for the Russian minister to submit his demands to permit the Vostgosterg to import freely, and he appears to have succeeded, as we have seen by the issue of the decree to which reference has been made. As the Vostgosterg is going to do its own retailing, as it does in Hodeidah, and is in a position to undersell the local merchants, the latter fear for the loss of their trade. Many of them, as it is known, hold Government orders against customs house receipts given them in part payment of official obligations for merchandise purchased. The immediate effect of the decree will be a curtailment of sales from other countries of petroleum products, grains, sugar, tea, matches and possibly additional products. British India and some of the British colonies and dominions will probably suffer most, although, of course, not particularly seriously, in view of the fact that the Hejazi-Nejd market is limited even at its best. Some people are inclined to believe that ibn Saud, in granting permission to the Russians to trade freely, had his tongue in his cheek, his plan being to allow them to trade only until taxes and other income from them will have liquidated his £30,000 obligation. This is not an impracticable idea, since, besides the pilgrimage, the King's most lucrative source of income has been the Jedda group of merchants, and he cannot remain in power and antagonize them coincidentally for very long. The merchants, of course, would not be adverse to retailing Russian goods in behalf of the Vostgostorg, and to obtain this privilege they are said already to have petitioned.

Ibn Saud, who has so long maintained his defiant attitude towards what he pleases to call European imperialism, is apt to lose much prestige in the Muslim world by his present activities. Never especially popular in Islam, he is by many thought to be prostituting himself and the holy land to his ambitions. And his new attitude towards Russia, which thinking Mohamedans of the

Mediterranean

Mediterranean, India and elsewhere regard as an anti-religious government, may further weaken his position as guardian of the holy places. The Consulate, which has for some time predicted the beginning of Ibn Saud's fall as a world personage, and his retirement to Nejd, if the 1933 pilgrimage were a failure, feels that its views have been greatly strengthened by the recent events in the Saudi Arabia of which an outline has been furnished above.

Respectfully yours,

W. N. Walmsley, jr.
American Vice Consul

File No. 800/851

WNW/fks

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NOTE

SEE 790f.90j/10 FOR #28

FROM Aden (Fox) DATED July 8, 1933
TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING:

Relations between King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia and Imam Yehia of the Yemen.

Belief that trouble is impending. Comments on the Assir revolt and attack upon Najran by the Imam. Substance of treaty between Ibn Saud and the Imam concerning Assir.

89 OF 00/44

44

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DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 711.90a 2/35 FOR #302

FROM Iraq (Knabenshue) DATED May 3,1934
TO NAME 1—1127

REGARDING: General political conditions in Saudi Arabia.
Reports the -- as observed during a recent visit.

890F.00/45

lec

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Baghdad, October 18, 1934.

No. 391,
Diplomatic

Subject: Military Operations in Saudi Arabia Denied.

NOV 16 1934 PM

NOV 15 34 PM RECD

NOV 19 1934

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-C/C
NOV 17 1934

Sir:

I have the honor to report that on October 15, 1934, "Al-Istiqlal", one of the local papers, published a letter from the Saudi Arabian Charge d'Affaires at Baghdad, Shaikh Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Mo'ammar.

Shaikh Ibrahim flatly contradicted a statement published in "Al-Defa", a newspaper in Jaffa, Palestine, and reprinted locally, to the effect that King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud had ordered Abdul Aziz ibn Musa'id, Emir of Hail, to mobilize a miltary force and occupy "Taima'". The Saudi Arabian Charge d'Affaires stated that the report was without foundation, and that Saudi Arabia is enjoying perfect peace under the aegis of His Saudi Majesty, Abdul Aziz.

Respectfully yours,

P. Knabenshue.

NOV 21 1934 FILED

File No. 711.

JSM/rlh.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Cairo, January 16, 1936.

No. 502.

Subject: Review of the Situation in Saudi Arabia by H. St. J. B. Philby.

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FEB 18 1936

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
FEB 19 1936
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FEB 14 1936
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FEB 24 1936

890F.00/47

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note
765.84

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith as of possible interest to the Department a press clipping from the EGYPTIAN GAZETTE of January 14, 1936, containing a review of the situation in Saudi Arabia by Mr. H. St. J. B. Philby, the well known British Moslem convert and author who has made his home for some years at Jidda.

The review is principally interesting for its discussion of the relations of Saudi Arabia to the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. In

remarking

remarking upon the recent visit of an Ethiopian diplomatic mission to Jidda Mr. Philby notes that the Government of Saudi Arabia has informed both the Ethiopian and Italian Governments of its strict neutrality in the present conflict. In view of this attitude Mr. Philby does not anticipate that Saudi Arabia will respond affirmatively to the invitation from the League of Nations to associate itself with the League Powers in the application of sanctions against Italy.

Contrary to the opinion at one time entertained locally Mr. Philby does not believe that Saudi Arabia is likely to constitute an important source of supply for Italy. The view has been expressed that in the event the sanctions against Italy were extended to forbid the furnishing to that country of a wide list of exports goods might be shipped to Saudi Arabia and there transhipped to the Italian possessions in East Africa. So far as concerns the exports included in the present sanctions of the League only transport animals in the form of camels are available in Saudi Arabia and as Mr. Philby notes, the sale of these to Italy has been limited by the question of cash payment.

Respectfully yours,

Bert Fish.

Enclosure:

Clipping from the EGYPTIAN GAZETTE
January 14, 1936.

File No. 800/710
JRC/icg

Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 502 of
January 16, 1936 from the Legation at Cairo

From the EGYPTIAN GAZETTE of January 14, 1936.

THE NEW YEAR IN ARABIA

KING IBN SA'UD'S TENTH ACCESSION DAY

SA'UDIA AND THE WAR

STRICT NEUTRALITY

BETTER RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN

By H. St. J. B. Philby.

(Exclusive to the "Egyptian Gazette.")

Mecca, January 4.

On January 8 the tenth anniversary of the accession of His Majesty to the Hedjaz throne will be celebrated with suitable ceremony. The King himself is at the moment on a short visit to the Hasa province, which he has not visited since 1932 and which has recently suffered a grievous loss in the death of its illustrious governor, Abdullah Ibn Jilawi. H.R.H. the Amir Sa'ud is at his post at Riyadh, and the forthcoming celebrations at Jeddah will be presided over by H.R.H. the Amir Faisal in his capacity of Viceroy of the Hedjaz. He will probably proceed from Mecca to Jeddah on the morning of the 8th, when the diplomatic representatives of the various Powers and the leading officials and notables of the town will have an opportunity of offering their congratulations. In the evening the Amir Faisal will entertain about a hundred guests to dinner in honour of the occasion, and there will doubtless be other functions during the day.

On the following day H.E. Tal'at Harb Pasha and his party are expected to arrive at Jeddah from Egypt by airplane. They will be entertained to dinner that night by Fuad Hamza, the Deputy Foreign Minister, at the villa of Kandara, and the Pasha's programme during his sojourn in the Hedjaz includes visits to Mecca and Medina (the journey to the latter to be made by airplane), in both of which cities the experts accompanying him will make an intensive study of proposed schemes for supplying house-to-house electric lighting and water. These boons to the citizens of the holy cities will, if they materialise at an early date as is hoped, constitute a historic memorial of the King's reign to date.

The Hedjaz and Ethiopia

An Abyssinian diplomatic mission, which has been at Jeddah for several weeks, left a few days ago on its return to Addis Ababa. The present circumstances of Ethiopia inevitably make it impossible for the Arabian Government to conclude a formal treaty with its neighbour across the sea, but it is understood that the Abyssinian Government has been invited to send a consul to Jeddah for the time being. Like the Italian Government, it has been informed that the Government of Sa'udi Arabia has adopted an attitude of neutrality in the present unhappy conflict. Obviously no other course was possible in the circumstances, and in any case it is unlikely that any trade on a large scale will develop between Arabia and either of the belligerent states. The presence at Jeddah of a substantially enlarged Italian colony may have given rise in certain quarters to exaggerated reports of the business it is concerned with, but it may be said that so far not more than a thousand camels have been sold to Italian purchasing agents. Arabia would indeed be glad to sell many more of these useful animals to either party for good money, but cash does not seem to be available in excessive quantities, while adequate or satisfactory substitutes for cash have not yet been devised.

A communication from the League of Nations inviting the Sa'udi Arabian Government to associate itself with sanctions is scarcely likely to be productive of any practical result; firstly because of the above-mentioned declaration of neutrality to the parties concerned; secondly because this Government is not a member of the League of Nations; and thirdly because, while it has nothing to gain from the adoption of the League's suggestion, it can except no compensation for any moral or material loss it may sustain. I understand that the question of Arabia joining the League of Nations as a member is under the consideration of the proper departments, but it is scarcely likely that any decision will be arrived at in the near future. Meanwhile the Government will doubtless consider it its duty to steer clear of all complications whatsoever.

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NOTE

SEE 890b.00/170 FOR memorandum

FROM State Department (Childs) DATED May 13, 1938
TO Near Eastern Division NAME

1—1127 GPO

890F.00/48

REGARDING: Italian activities in Saudi Arabia.

Comments on - and efforts to bring about the overthrow of King Ibn Saud.

Comments on Anglo-Italian accord of April 16,1938 providing for joint recognition of status quo in Saudi Arabia and the Yemen.

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890f.00

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

890F.00/49

SEE 890h.00/171 FOR memorandum

FROM State Department (Childs) DATED May 20, 1938
TO Near Eastern Division
NAME

1—1127 sfo

REGARDING: Provisions of the Anglo-Italian accord of April 16, 1938, concerning joint recognition of the status quo in Arabia.

Comments on -.

W1

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NOTE

SEE 890b.00/178 FOR Despatch #1299

FROM Iraq (Knabenshue) DATED May 25, 1939
TO NAME

1--1127 ••o

REGARDING:

Political conditions in Saudi Arabia:
Encloses memorandum of conversation with Dr. P. W. Harrison commenting on - .

M

890F.00/50

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

FROM Aden.

Dated October 13, 1939

Rec'd 12:53 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

2, October 13, 11 p.m.

Heavy fighting between British and ~~Arabs on~~ Yemen boundary reported.

Mutiny by all non-European seamen on all British merchant vessels reaching Aden being settled by granting of 100% increase in salaries and other considerations. Several German merchant vessels reported to be arming at Massawa are worrying British naval forces.

COWAN

890F.00/51

NM

Paraphrase of confidential telegram dated October 13, 1939, received from the American Vice Consul at Aden. (890F.00/51)

British naval forces are reported to be concerned regarding the reported arming at Massawa of several German merchant vessels.

Heavy fighting is reported by the Arabs and British on the Yemen boundary.

Mutiny by non-European seamen on British merchant vessels arriving at Aden is being settled by an increase in the salaries of such seamen by 100% and other considerations.

Central File: Decimal File 890F.00, Internal Affairs Of States, Saudi Arabia, Political Affairs., January 10, 1930 - October 13, 1939. January 10, 1930 - October 13, 1939. MS Saudi Arabia: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1959: Saudi Arabia: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com/apps/doc/SC5111202109/GDSC?u=uagm&sid=GDSC&xid=210ed468&pg=3. Accessed 13 Apr. 2021.